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June 1989

100 Games Rated!

Abrams Battle Tank • Batman • Journey

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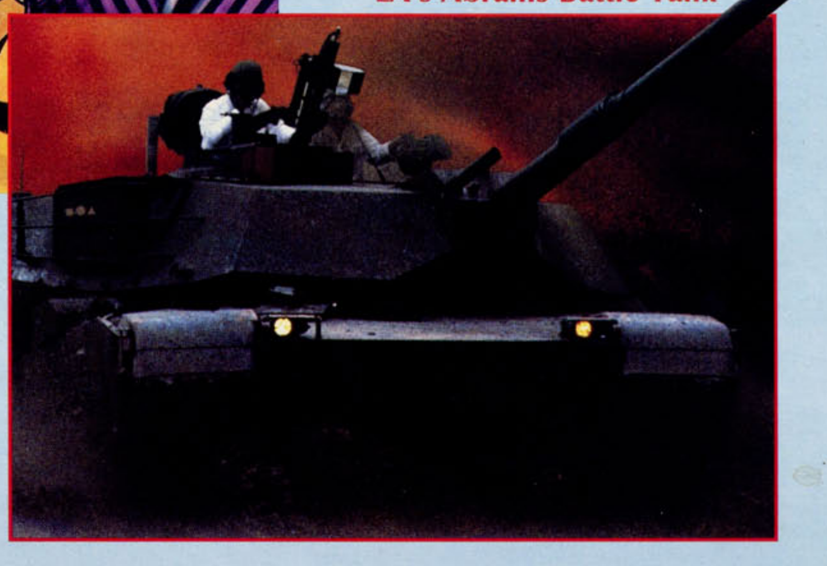


Data East's Batman

Also In This Issue:

- **Hidden Agenda**
- **Presumed Guilty**
- **Battles of Napoleon**
- **Game Developers' Conference**

EA's Abrams Battle Tank



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Covering the World of Computer Games For Eight Years

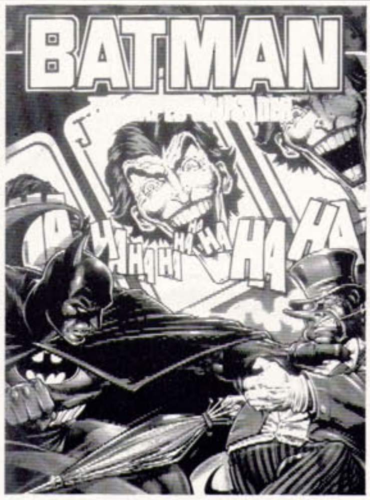
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Not A Revolting Development

In the Developers' Conference article in CGW #56, I noted the statement, "multi-player games have not . . . been great commercial successes." I think this is because most multi-player games have long individual *turns*. Most of *M.U.L.E.*, by contrast, involves all players with the individual turns themselves being short. I suspect this is the key. My three sons and I have enjoyed this game for over two years and still play it.

Paul Tenney
Hernoon, VA

Ed: You have a good point, Paul, but the article also notes that M.U.L.E. was more of a critical success than commercial success. 30,000 units in sales is not equivalent to a "Gold Record."

Articles of Enumeration

In rating articles for the R.I.D. questionnaire, is the standard absolute or relative? Since all CGW articles are above average to begin with, I assume you want a relative rating, i.e. compared to other CGW articles.

Bruce Bernard
Erie, PA

Ed: Thanks, Bruce. You are exactly right. We need to know how each of you readers react to each article, because we consider your ratings when planning future issues. Try to rate the articles on the basis of interest in the subject matter (not necessarily how good the game itself is), the reviewer's style and approach, and whether you learned anything from it.

Aye, Aye, Gilman!

Concerning his letter in the April issue of CGW, I want to thank Gilman Louie for hitting the nail squarely on the head on the issue of piracy. Pirates can roll their excuses any way they like, but they and those who own the same hardware are the ultimate losers. What software developer in his right mind is going to develop a product over a one to two year period, only to have it given away? I personally own between 150-200 pieces of software, none pirated. Yes, there are programs out there I would like to get, but who wouldn't want to own a Rolls Royce? Does that justify stealing it?

Martin J. Hrovat
Slidell, LA

Ed: Thanks for the concurring opinion, Martin. We thought the statistics cited by Gilman Louie regarding the highly organized Atari ST pirates spoke quite eloquently to the problem on that machine, as well as piracy in the mainstream. As the next writer shows, however, there are "pirates" sailing other than the Atari's seas.

I very much resent the accusation that ST users are more tolerant than others of piracy. On the contrary, because of circumstances, ST users tend to be *less* tolerant (on the whole). The people I know who are tolerant of piracy are Apple, MS-DOS, and Macintosh users. But, the ST is the sort of affordable high-powered computer that does attract the mostly young men who *organize* piracy through BBS systems. What this means in lost software sales is arguable, of course.

Ruth Coy
Laurel, MD

Ed: Mr. Louie's point was not to say that Atari ST users are the only ones who tolerate piracy. He was lamenting the loss of viability in publishing for the ST because of: a) small user base and b) organized piracy. Fortunately, some companies are still publishing for the ST in the U.S. as an addendum to successful ST sales in Europe. Now, even though you are probably right that "mostly young men" organize piracy, we want to go on record as stating that "Piracy is not manly!"

Strategic Error

The best strategic game I've *ever* come across has never been mentioned in your magazine. It is *Strategic Conquest* on the Mac. Essentially, it is *Empire* with many refinements that raise it way beyond the "clunky" but adequate **Interstel** implementation.

Bob White
Frederick, MD

Ed: Actually, Bob. We think the "Empire" implementation is rather elegant, as do a large number of our readers. As for your assumption that "Strategic Conquest" has never been mentioned in our magazine, you might read the review in CGW #35 (p. 53) and note its mention in R.I.D. #35. As the song goes, "Never, say never, say never again." You never know when you might be corrected in print.

"B"ing Selective

The April issue (CGW #58) gets a "B." I would only purchase a couple of the games mentioned. Sports doesn't interest me. While faster and better graphics are nice, it seems that game makers have forgotten the storyline. Hack slash and speed aren't for me.

David Hicks
Erie, PA

P.S. You do a good job.

Ed: Let me get this right. You graded the magazine down because the games covered were not ones you would like to purchase? To paraphrase Red Skelton's line whenever his gags didn't work, "We just review 'em. We don't publish 'em." ("We just do 'em. We don't explain 'em.") Of course, we like the next grade better.

CGW Rates A++!

Robert Panchuk
Vancouver, B.C. CANADA

Ed: You're all right, Robert. Even though you probably root for the "Canucks!"

Ratings Game

Another great issue, keep it going! The ratings list is a great idea. It helps me decide what games to buy. It is usually my final decision maker.

Mark F. Leone
Southwick, MA

I don't like the new letter (A-F) grades system. Bring back 1-9!!

Carl Lund
Bruno, MN

Rerating games A-F is a great idea!

David Bove
Merrick, NY

Much better R.I.D. system. It's just like school!

Adrian Williams
Alva, FL

I would find the games ratings more meaningful if they were divided into broad age groups. Also, have you ever considered making the rating data available on an online service?

Bob Wentzel
St. Louis, MO

Ed: We like the new R.I.D. ratings a lot! We want to hear from the rest of you, though. Also, we are experimenting with a couple of online ratings devices (Compuserve and PCLink). We hope to add others, if these work out.

We Move Our Tale For You

[I just read your latest airline anecdote in the February C.E.S. Report.] What airline do you guys fly, anyway? Ever consider the train? Or bus?

Jeff Petraska
New Boston, MI

Ed: Our well-chronicled airline "disasters" (which usually begin or end our C.E.S. reports) have occurred on a variety of airlines. Thanks for your concern for our safety. Of course, if Major Bill (Stealey) will continue our flight lessons (see Fantastic Voyages IV), we may not have to worry.



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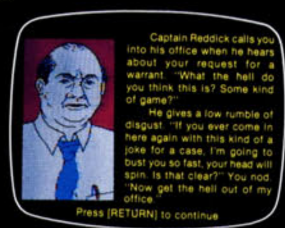
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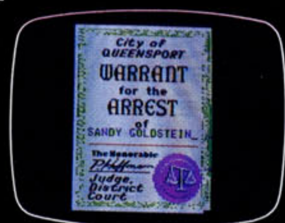


The Death of Reverend Slade: The former confidence man and bunko artist is found shot to death in the chapel of his new church. Has the good Reverend reformed, or was this the biggest scam of all?

Lincoln's Acorn: A priceless piece of American history disappears and Queensport's mayor gives you 12 hours to find it!

The Big Takeover: Officer Janet Gale lies critically wounded in Queensport Hospital after being caught in the crossfire. Your investigation could clear her name, or was there a sinister motive behind the attack?.

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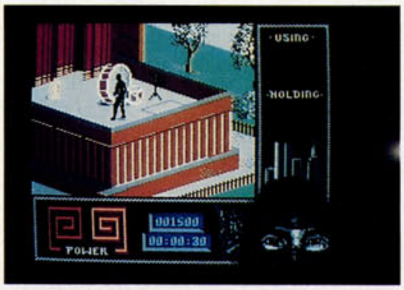
Nels Anderson
92 Bishop Drive
Framingham, MA 01701

MAH JONGG: It is rare for CGW to "peek" a shareware game, but this version of the famous tile game is getting play time in our office. Players match and remove pairs of similar tiles, while trying to reduce the total number of remaining blocks to zero. Points are scored for matched tile sets. The attractive graphics require an EGA or Hercules graphics adaptor. IBM ($10.00). Circle Reader Service #1.

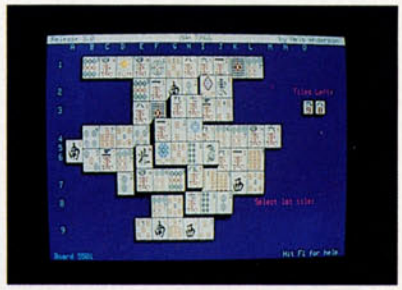
Activision
3885 Bohannon Drive
Menlo Park, CA 94025

LAST NINJA 2: This sequel to *The Last Ninja* requires players to fight their way through seven more levels of play, armed with the usual assortment of weaponry - swords, staffs, nunchuckas and shurikens. Players do battle in the streets of New York with cops, samurai, alligators (flushed down the sewers), and even a ferocious leopard. C-64 ($34.95). Circle Reader Service #2.

Advertisers



Ninja 2



Mah Jongg



P51 Mustang



Lords of the Rising Sun



Chomp!



Western Games

Bullseye Software
P.O. Drawer 7900
Incline Village, NV 89450

P51 MUSTANG FLIGHT SIMULATOR: Fly in the European theatre during summer, 1944. Players practice flights in England, then cross the channel to fight Me109's, strafe ground targets, and even buzz the Eiffel tower. There are 13 different camera angles for watching replays of the wire-frame graphic action, and the game can be played solo or between two, cable-linked Macs. Mac ($59.95). Circle Reader Service #3.

Cinemaware
4165 Thousand Oaks Blvd.,
Westlake Village, CA 91362

LORDS OF THE RISING SUN: Twelfth century Japan becomes a battleground as the player attempts to conquer all of the castles in the land and become Shogun. Great music, gorgeous graphics and tricky action sequences all flesh out the overall strategic problems inherent in conquering a medieval land. The player will invade and defend castles, control troop maneuvers in battle, pursue and destroy vanquished daimyos and fight off ninja assassins. This one is well worth the wait! Amiga with 1 meg ($49.95). Circle Reader Service #4.

Cosmi
431 N. Figueroa St.
Wilmington, CA 90744

CHOMP!: It's a 'dog eat dog' ... err ...'fish eat fish' world in this cute, aquatic action game. Players control a stir-crazy goldfish who escapes his pet store bowl and progresses through tropical fish tanks, gobbling up food and other fish,



The Last Inca



Journey



Shogun



Action Fighter



Magic Johnson's Basketball



Pole Position II

while avoiding capture by the pesky pet store cat. The restless goldfish can eventually escape the pet store and brave the unknown waters without. Be careful! One slip of the fin and you'll receive a burial at sea ! C-64 pictured ($24.95), IBM ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #5.

Digitek Software
8910 N. Dale Mabry Executive Center, Suite #37
Tampa, Florida 33614

WESTERN GAMES: Players compete against each other or the computer in six mini-games with a western theme. There's armwrestlin', shootin', quid spittin', dancin', milkin' and eatin'. The game features cute graphics, digitized sound, and uses keyboard or joystick. Is this really how the West was won? Amiga ($34.95). Circle Reader Service #6.

Free Spirit Software
P.O. Box 128
58 Noble Street
Kutztown, PA 19530

THE LAST INCA: Graphics and text combine in this adventure game set in the land of the Incas. The player must find the Crown of Power before the evil wizard Zulphosi gets it and destroys the Incan people. Along the way the player will encounter the Greate Condor, the forgotten civilization of the megaterras, and the emerald of Xiahuxi. Keep those pronunciation dictionaries handy! Amiga ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #7.

Infocom
125 Cambridge Park Drive
Cambridge, MA 02140

JOURNEY: Look for a feature review elsewhere in this issue.

SHOGUN: The player takes the part of English sea pilot John Blackthorne in the 16th century. Shipwrecked in a mysterious land, he must make his way through the exotic, war-torn landscape, to ??? Based on the book, the player's success will be determined by how well he thinks and acts as compared to the fictional Blackthorne. Amiga pictured and Mac ($59.95). Circle Reader Service #8.

Mindscape
3444 Dundee Road
Northbrook, IL 60062

ACTION FIGHTER: This arcade hit is transformed to the home computer with ultra-smooth scrolling and fast-paced action. Players must carry out five air and ground battles to succeed. Starting out on a motorcycle, it's possible to find and assemble spare parts that ultimately transform the two-wheeler into a supercharged aircraft. Amiga pictured ($39.95), and C-64 ($24.95). Circle Reader Service #9.

POLE POSITION II: "Prepare to qualify!" Players get to pilot Formula 1 racecars over four challenging courses in the home version of the arcade racing game. Qualifying runs determine the player's pole position for the big race. Accelerate, shift, and weave your way to the checkered flag. IBM pictured, and C-64 ($24.95). Circle Reader Service #10.

THUNDER BLADE: The ultimate attack helicopter comes to the home in this version of the best-selling arcade game. The player will fly over skyscrapers, mountains, deserts and sea to defeat the enemy, lurking in an off-site refinery in the middle of the ocean. Excellent graphics, scrolling and sound. Amiga pictured and ST ($49.95), C-64 ($34.95). Circle Reader Service #11.

Melbourne House
711 W. 17th St., Suite G9
Costa Mesa, CA 92627

MAGIC JOHNSON'S BASKETBALL: The mystical moves of the 'Magic Man' come to the computer in this coin-op conversion of "Magic Johnson's Fastbreak Basketball." One or two

(Continued on page 46)


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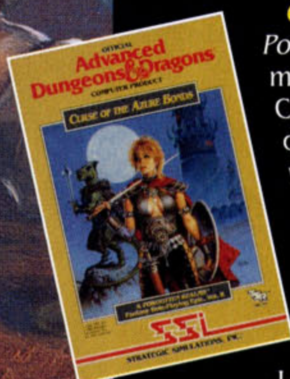
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CURSE OF THE AZURE BONDS: the sequel to *Pool of Radiance,* with deadlier monsters, more powerful spells and new Player-Character types. In this game, you find your characters' arms mysteriously imprinted with azure blue symbols. When they glow, they ensnare your will — you must do as they command! Search the realms for members of the New Alliance who forged these chains of enslavement and remove the Curse of the Azure Bonds.

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High Powered Pillbox

Electronic Arts' "Abrams Battle Tank"

TITLE:	Abrams Battle Tank
SYSTEM:	IBM
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNERS:	Damon Slye Dynamix
PUBLISHER:	Electronic Arts San Mateo, CA



By M. Evan Brooks

Abrams Battle Tank (*Tank*) is a simulation of modern armored conflict at the individual tank level. The player has a myriad of mission choices (or a grand campaign) in the European (Central Front) environment of World War III. Although *Tank* is described as a simulation, as will be seen, it is really much more of a game and should be considered as such.

Tank portrays an individual Abrams Main Battle Tank. The doctrinal problem is that a single tank in a combat environment has four uses: (1) in a hull defilade position (dug-in), it serves as an adequate pillbox (defensive); (2) it allows one to withdraw quicker than on foot (retrograde); (3) it serves as a coffin (offensive); (4) it serves as an excellent protective shelter in an NBC (nuclear-biological-chemical) environment). The use of armor, in single elements and without infantry support, is simply not militarily acceptable.

Documentation

The documentation is brief, but adequate. All weapons systems and scenarios are delineated and this, in turn, serves as part of the protection scheme. Because of this approach, the program may be easily loaded onto a hard disk, substantially enhancing access performance.

Concerning threat vehicles, tanks are noted by the year of appearance; thus, the "T-72" first appeared in 1972, while the "T-80" appeared in 1980. The newest Soviet tank, the FST-1, is simply a military acronym for "Future Soviet Tank." Very little is known about this tank and its appearance constitutes the designers' "best guesstimate."

Weapons Systems: The Abrams Tank has two weapons systems—the main gun and a coaxial machine gun. The latter is of limited use, since its range is sufficiently short (c. 1000 m.) that one can generally crush the enemy PBI (poor bloody infantry) by tread before achieving target acquisition. The main gun fires HEAT (High Explosive -- Anti-Tank), SABOT (literally "boot", a shell within a shell that is the most effective tank-killer today), and AX (an experimental anti-armor, anti-aircraft wire-guided shell). AX is noted as experimental, although it is available in the game. From the documentation, it would appear that AX is a main gun-TOW missile. Such weapons are still in testing stages and have not been field issued. Also, certain ammunition types have been omitted: HEP (high explosive -- plastic) [anti-armor], APERS ("Beehive") [anti-personnel], AP (armor piercing) and HE (high explosive). The game requires the use of HEAT against "soft" targets (i.e. infantry and/or improved structures), which is not overly accurate.

Graphics

Graphics are well-defined, although there are certain deficiencies. Internal instrumentation panels are minimal, while external terrain features are much better defined (This is the exact opposite of **Accolade**'s *Steel Thunder*). Different views are available (from the perspective of the driver, gunner or tank commander). Also, informational screens are available which yield current status and/or damage conditions. Zoom views are available on a toggle which yields a 3 or 10 times perspective. This feature is well-executed and one can often find and fix a threat at a great distance through such features. However, remember that utilizing the zoom feature restricts one's total arc of view and use it accordingly.

The most serious deficiency concerning the terrain is that hills and slopes are visible on screen, but until one actually attempts to traverse such terrain, it is virtually impossible to determine whether or not the steepness of slope would prohibit successful movement. In reality, a tank commander would be able to determine by experience and eye-ball the potential of terrain traversability. Since such terrain is not visible on the hard copy map, it does present an overly artificial constraint on the user.

Game Play

Military Professionalism: The briefing and mission recap is done by one's superior officer, Colonel Wilson. However, Colonel Wilson does not resemble any military officer this reviewer has ever encountered. His comments to kill "scum-sucking Commies" or his threats to have one executed because of mission failure may furnish some mild entertainment, but such attitudes are not "military" in any sense of the word. As an officer in the U.S. Army Reserve (Infantry), this reviewer felt personally affronted and the "game" reinforces the civilian world's worst fears about military officers.

Here to There and Back Again: In order to succeed with *Tank*, study the mission carefully and execute it slowly; in most missions, time is not of the essence (the Mossel Intercept is the exception). Therefore, although the vehicle can achieve rapid speeds, such usage will merely throw

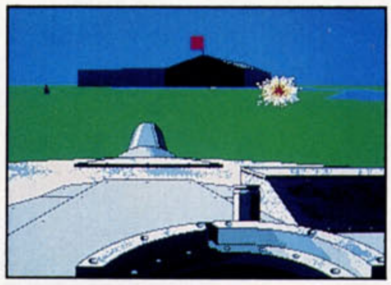
one into the midst of an enemy ambuscade. The best tactic is a slow but methodical advance. Whenever substantial damage is received, a return to the motor park for repairs and rearmament is most urgent. One may not fulfill his dreams of a hell-for-leather advance, but the slow march to victory is a better gaming decision.

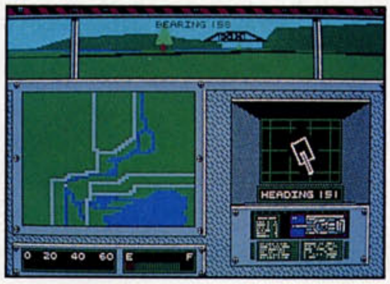
Input is via keyboard or joystick. This reviewer cannot speak as to the joystick option (since a 20-mhz card is not available), but the keyboard did have certain drawbacks. Steering laterally (left/right) is easy with arrow keys, however, maintaining a steady speed after a turn is difficult, as one's speed tends to increase when resuming a forward vector. This reviewer has been told that the game runs rather slowly on the older 8088 chip, which may well detract from play value.

One may switch between turret control and vehicle control. This is quite useful when one wishes to fire at an angle, but keep moving in a certain direction. Just remember which control function one is currently using; in a combat situation, turret access may prevent one from realizing that he cannot quickly move out of harm's way.

Weapons of Choice: To insure operational readiness, make sure that the weapons systems are loaded. This reviewer's preference is for the AX; it allows maximum stand-off but when used with the zoom feature, it permits optimal destruction. The disadvantage of the AX is that it requires a minimum range of 770 meters. If an enemy vehicle is able to penetrate that distance, one must quickly reload with either HEAT or Sabot. Also, although one can lock onto a target, practice will reveal that one can often achieve significant kill ratios merely by target acquisition and not target lock.

View from Afar: Given the fact that there are four viewing positions, only two have any real use. The tank commander's station allows one to determine his ground position, while the gunner's station allows one to fix and destroy the enemy. This reviewer recommends maximum use of the gunner's station. Only here can the weapons systems be accessed. The commander's position should be used to orient one geographically, but remember to return to the gunner station when contact is imminent!





CONCLUSIONS

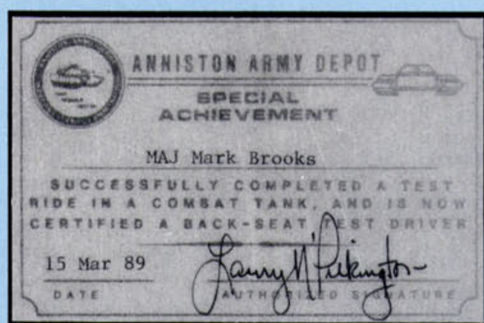
Tank is entertaining as a game. It offers excitement and a chance to destroy the nefarious enemy hordes. However, a simulation, it is not. Doctrine, professionalism and employment of armor are all lacking. As long as one recognizes that this is a game, there is no harm done. Nevertheless, do not think that one can achieve viable insights into armor tactics in the contemporary combat environment. *Abrams Battle Tank* succeeds as something more than an arcade-type game. It does require planning and careful execution; however, it is not a simulation and should not be treated as such. **CGW**

M. Evan Brooks Rides The Abrams

How does one prepare to review a simulation on *Abrams Battle Tank*—obviously, by taking a ride! Now, this reviewer recognizes that it is quite difficult to drop down to your local tank shop and take a test drive, but there are ways . . .

While spending annual training at Fort McClellan, Alabama, this reviewer was given the opportunity to take a tour of the nearby Anniston Army Depot. This depot is the main tank repair facility in the United States. If you happen to "total" your tank, Anniston is the place to go. The Anniston Depot rebuilds the vehicle from virtual scratch. Stretching for acres, the facility is a fascinating experience in technology. The factory interior is larger than several football fields and watching a tank come together from disparate parts is unforgettable. Currently, the Depot rebuilds 4 tanks per week. In a "surge" (mobilization), output could increase to over 40 tanks per week.

After seeing the re-construction of an Abrams, this reviewer was given a test ride. The most interesting facet about riding the Abrams is the smoothness of the ride. Thinking that the average speed seemed to be c. 20 miles per hour, this reviewer was quite surprised to discover that the actual speed was c. 48 mph. Roaring around a test track, we passed over a series of "inverted v's" which test the shocks and stability,



one could almost be sipping coffee and not spill a drop. The smoothness of the ride is astonishing, almost Mercedes-like. The main difference is the cost (several million dollars) and mileage (low).

The second time around the track covered the "v's"again, only this time at a speed of c. 15 mph. This time, one could feel each jolt and bump extremely well. Continued such experiences could lead to internal jellification. Overall, the Abrams is a superb vehicle. Having been trained on the armor vehicles of an earlier age (the M114 Armored Reconnaissance Vehicle and the M60A1 tank), this reviewer was extremely impressed by the capabilities of the contemporary main battle tank.

The Anniston Army Depot is closed to civilians, but if the reader ever has the opportunity to take the tour, this reviewer strongly encourages it. I would like to thank Mr. Benny McCain and the staff at the Depot for their kindness and courtesies.



L'epoque du Francais Empire

A Scenario of The Battle of Eylau for SSI's "Battles of Napoleon"

by Omar DeWitt

The *Battles of Napoleon* construction kit allows the designer to go into great detail, but it also has its limitations. The box copy says "any" Napoleonic battle can be reconstructed. However, it is not easy to fit large battles into the format. The ideal battle size is about two corps per side, fighting over terrain covering five square miles. Since the largest individual unit in the computer menu is the regiment, any battle with division-sized units will be misnamed when referred to on the screen. This may be no big deal, but it is a limitation.

The ideal size of each square is 100 yards on a side. If the square is to cover more area, the range of the weapons can be altered and the OP cost for entering a square can be changed. However, the road movement rate cannot be changed, the length of a turn is always 30 minutes, and stacking limitations cannot be altered. Whether the square covers 10,000 square yards or 40,000 square yards, the maximum number of men that can be placed in a given square is 1,800. This limit can be artificially evaded by scaling down the unit size so that the number of men listed for each unit is one-tenth its actual size. That way, 18,000 men would fit on a square. Frankly, this writer suspects that changing the size to any great degree beyond 100 yards per side may actually affect the computer opponent's play. Whenever I expanded the size of the squares, I had French artillery units unlimbering several squares away.

Unlimbering Your Scenario (The System)

There are several steps in creating your own scenarios. I would suggest that you do not use the "Generate a New Scenario" option. When I tried to increase the unit count beyond the 47 in the Quatre Bras model, my Apple version chopped the excess off—on two occasions. Test your version by adding a few imaginary units and asking the computer to Reorganize before you spend a lot of time creating your army. The safe choice is to Edit the Waterloo Scenario ("WAT" to the computer).

The first step in creating your own scenario is army creation. It is also the most time consuming. Filling in the Leader Organization Table, the first phase, is quite straightforward. This establishes a line of command. How far down it can go depends on the number of corps in the battle. In the Unit Organization phase, each unit must be assigned to one of the leaders listed in the Leader Organization Table and each of those leaders must be assigned to be present in one of the units. After one of my army leaders was wounded while in a frontline unit, I thought it would be more realistic to create a "Staff" unit of 50-60 men. I would put the army leader with that unit and he would stay out of the way. Initially, I made this a cavalry unit. Unfortunately, even though I kept my leader behind the lines, the computer opponent puts its cavalry to use. Napoleon and his 50 men charged on the first turn and, in turn, he was wounded. The "Staff" concept may have to be limited to games where you face a human opponent, although the computer was considerably more conservative when I made the "Staff" into an infantry unit and armed them with sabres.

Next, the Unit Editor phase lets you determine the details of each unit. The number of men, guns, and skirmishers is entered, along with type of unit, nationality, and weapon. Some subjective decisions have to be made when unit efficiency is entered. Except when a unit did unusually well or poorly in a battle, there is unlikely to be much comment on it in any written account, especially on

(Continued on page 14)

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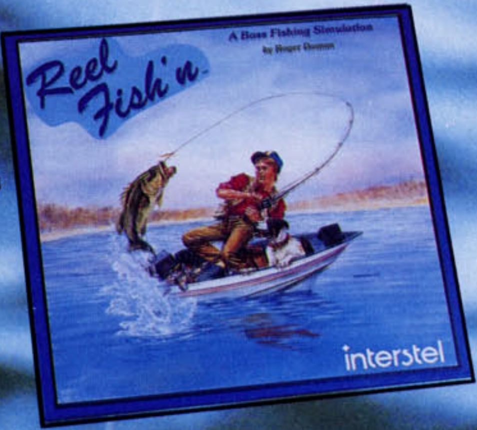
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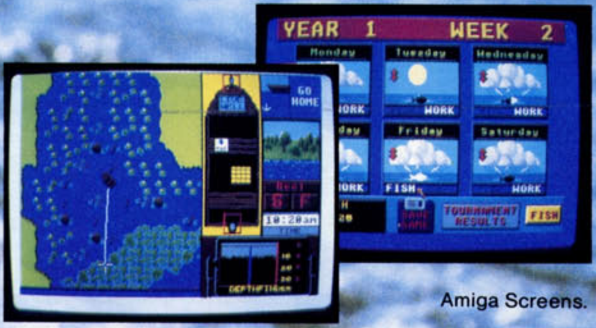
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FRENCH (Nat = 0)

In the unit tables that follow, some data are constant:

Fatigue = 0
Formation: Inf = 1, Cav = 7, Art = 5
Disruption = 0
Ammo = 7
Readiness = 5
% Skirmishers out = 0%

Road mode = N
On the tables (subordinate units are indented):
"A" means Army leader attached
"C" means Corps leader attached
"•" means Division leader attached.

Napoleon		Men	Skm Guns	T1	T2	T3	Weap	Max. Eff.	Eff	OP Mod	Rein. Turn	Sq	Mel.
0	Staff•	100	0	0	0	0	3	9	98	4			1
	Soult												
1	IV/C	470		1	1	0	3	8	98	3			9
2	IV/1A	630	30	2	3	8	6	7	78	2			4
3	IV/2A	625	30	2	2	8	28	7	78	2			4
4	IV/3A	375	18	2	3	8	6	7	78	2			4
5	IV/4A	310	15	2	3	8	27	7	78	2			4
6	IV/5A	312	15	2	3	8	18	7	78	0			4
		Leval											
7	1L/17•	800	800	0	1	28	0	7	78	0			3
8	2L/7	800	800	0	1	28	0	7	78	0			3
9	1/11	800	161	0	8	9	0	6	68	0			3
10	2/11	798	192	0	8	9	0	7	78	1			4
11	3/11	800	150	0	8	9	0	7	74	1			4
		Legrand											
12	1L/1•	850	850	0	1	28	0	6	68	0			3
13	2L/1	857	857	0	1	28	0	6	68	0			3
14	3L/1	890	890	0	1	28	0	7	78	1			3
15	4L/1	880	880	0	1	28	0	7	78	0			3
16	5L/1	875	875	0	1	28	0	7	78	0			4
17	27	897	151	0	8	9	0	8	88	1			5
		Hilaire											
18	1L/5	880	880	0	1	28	0	6	68	0			3
19	2L/5	887	887	0	1	28	0	6	68	0			3
20	3L/5	890	890	0	1	28	0	6	68	0			3
21	4L/5	895	895	0	1	28	0	6	68	0			3
22	1/9C	907	120	0	8	9	0	7	78	1			4
23	2/9•	1100	120	0	8	9	0	7	78	1			4
	Augereau												
24	VII/C	400		1	0	28	3	8	88	3			9
25	VII/1A	460	22	2	3	8	4	7	78	2			4
26	VII/2A	315	15	2	3	8	27	7	78	2			4
27	VII/3A	315	15	2	3	8	28	7	78	1			4
28	VII/4A	170	8	2	3	8	18	8	88	1			4
		Desjardin											
29	13•	1600	180	0	8	28	0	7	78	0			4
30	1L/14	891	891	0	1	28	0	6	68	0			5
31	2L/14	902	902	0	1	28	0	6	68	0			4
32	3L/14	886	886	0	1	28	0	6	68	0			4
33	1/51C	893	100	0	8	9	0	7	78	0			4
34	2/51	887	887	0	8	9	0	7	78	0			5
35	3/51	950	100	0	8	9	0	7	78	0			5
		Heudelet											
36	19•	1906	200	0	8	9	0	7	78	0			5
37	1L/18	897	897	0	1	28	0	6	68	0			4
38	2L/18	888	888	0	1	28	0	6	68	0			4
39	3L/18	900	900	0	1	28	0	7	78	0			4
40	22	1100	110	0	8	28	0	8	88	0			5
	Davout												
41	III/C	480		1	0	28	3	8	88	3	8	1	9
42	III/1A	375	18	2	3	8	7	8	88	2	8	1	4
43	III/2A	320	15	2	3	27	4	8	88	2	9	1	4
		Morand											
44	33•	2000	200	0	6	9	0	8	88	2	8	1	5
45	1L/22	900	900	0	1	28	0	8	88	2	8	1	5
46	2L/22	900	900	0	1	28	0	8	88	2	8	1	5
47	3L/22	900	900	0	1	28	0	8	88	2	8	1	5
48	41C	1100	120	0	8	9	0	8	88	2	8	1	5
		Friant											
49	L/26	900	900	0	1	28	0	8	88	2	9	1	5
50	39	900	100	0	8	9	0	8	88	2	9	1	5
51	40	900	100	0	8	9	0	8	88	2	9	1	5
52	81•	1170	120	0	6	9	0	8	88	2	9	1	5
		Gudin											
53	1L/52•	900	900	0	1	28	0	8	88	2	14	1	5
54	2L/52	900	900	0	1	28	0	8	88	2	14	1	5
55	1/44	900	90	0	8	9	0	8	88	2	14	1	5
56	2/44	1650	160	0	8	9	0	8	88	2	14	1	5
	Ney												
57	VI/C	450		1	0	28	3	8	88	3	21	2	9
58	VI/1A	420	20	2	3	8	6	8	88	2	21	2	4
		Marchand											
59	1L/88•	900	900	0	1	28	0	8	88	1	21	2	5
60	2L/88	900	900	0	1	28	0	7	68	1	21	2	5
61	94C	2000	200	0	8	28	0	8	88	2	21	2	5
62	1/43	900	100	0	8	9	0	8	98	1	21	2	5
63	2/43	1100	100	0	8	9	0	8	88	1	21	2	5
		Gardanne											
64	1L/25	900	900	0	1	28	0	7	78	0	21	2	5
65	2L/25	900	900	0	1	28	0	7	78	0	21	2	5
66	1/53	900	500	0	1	9	0	8	88	1	21	2	5
67	2/53•	1660	170	0	8	9	0	8	88	1	21	2	5
	Murat												
68	HSE/1A	160	8	2	4	27	24	9	98	2			4
69	HSE/2A	160	8	2	4	28	24	9	98	2			4
		Grouchy											
70	1/GR•	2000		1	2	4	3	9	98	4			9
71	2/GRC	1000		1	2	4	3	9	98	4			9
		Milhaud											
72	1/MIL•	2000		1	1	0	3	9	98	4			9
73	2/MIL	1000		1	1	0	3	9	98	4			9
		D'Hauspl											
74	1/DH•	1000		1	12	28	3	9	98	4			9
75	2/DH	1000		1	12	28	3	9	98	4			9
		Klein											
76	1/KL	1000		1	0	0	3	9	98	4			9
77	2/KL	1000		1	0	0	3	9	98	4			9
	Bessiers												
78	GD/C	1450		1	0	27	3	9	98	4	2	5	9
79	GD/AC	525	25	2	3	27	12	9	98	3	2	5	4
		Chasseur											
80	1/GD•	2200	500	0	5	27	0	9	98	1	2	5	6
81	2/GD	2200	500	0	5	27	0	9	98	1	2	5	6
		Grenadier											
82	3/GD+	2200	500	0	5	27	0	9	98	1	2	5	6
		Young Guard											
83	4/GD•	2006	500	0	6	27	0	8	88	1	2	5	5

the brigade level. An educated guess is needed, too, when an OP modifier and a melee value are chosen. Later in the process, when the units are deployed on the map, decisions can be made on facing, skirmishers, road mode, formation, and frontline status. However, that information should be entered at this time if the unit comes into the game as a reinforcement. If a scenario is being revised, make sure that all units not in your scenario have the number of men and guns set to zero, or else these units will appear in your scenario. Each army can be saved to a separate disk and/or you can continue to the next step in the creation process.

Map creation is the next step and it is easily accomplished. It is a good idea to draw the map on graph paper first. The program will construct a winding road (or ridge or stream) by following the cursor across the map. An "Auto Terrain" option makes it easy to add clumps of woods or fields. Pay attention to the elevation of the terrain being added or strange things will happen during play. The map, too, can be saved to a separate disk.

The units that start the game on the map have to be deployed. The computer will stack them on the map edges that you choose, but you must move them to their starting positions on the map. Units not initially presented can be called up *if* you know their numbers. In one case, the computer changed the reinforcement turn of a unit, repeatedly, but it could be put on the map by using the "Add" option. Units not deleted from the scenario you are revising may appear on the map. They can be eliminated here. Objective squares are chosen and point values assigned. These are important because they affect the computer opponent's strategy. Defensive lines for each army are determined; note that the third defensive line is actually the one farthest forward and the first is the rear-most. All of these special squares, plus artillery-objective squares will be set by the computer if you do not do so.

The final step is the revision of "Tables." Items that can be changed include victory points for casualties; weapon name, range, and destructiveness; terrain cost; combat effectiveness in relation to formation and terrain; and probability of cavalry charging.

Although there may be some other factors we wish we could change, there is enough rich detail here to keep us more than satisfied.

"Artillerie, Pointer!" (Historical Notes)

The battle at Preussisch-Eylau, Poland in 1807 was unusual in that it was one of the few major battles of the time that was fought in winter. The entire field of battle was snow covered and bodies of water were both frozen and invisible.

The conflict came about when the Russian force under General Bennigsen moved westward to drive back the weak French left and

LEADER ORGANIZATIONAL TABLE: French

Bonus	##	Size	Name	Sup	##	Size	Name	Sup	Bonus
15	0	Arm	Napoleon	61	15	Cor	Murat	0	14
11	1	Cor	Soult	0	16	Div	Grouchy	15	12
10	2	Div	Leval	1	17	Div	Milhaud	15	12
10	3	Div	Legrand	1	18	Div	D'Hauspl	15	12
11	4	Div	Hilaire	1	19	Div	Klein	15	12
8	5	Cor	Augereau	0	20	Cor	Bessiers	0	13
11	6	Div	Desjardn	5	21	Div	Chasseur	20	12
11	7	Div	Heudelet	5	22	Div	Gren	20	13
14	8	Cor	Davout	0	23	Div	Yng Gd	20	12
12	9	Div	Morand	8	24	Cor	X	0	
12	10	Div	Friant	8	25	Cor	X	0	
11	11	Div	Gudin	8	26	Cor	X	0	
10	12	Cor	Ney	0	27	Brg	X	0	
11	13	Div	Marchand	12	28	Brg	X	0	
12	14	Div	Gardanne	12	29	Div	X	0	

establish the Russians on the Vistula, in good position for a spring campaign. Napoleon countered by maneuvering his columns in an attempt to trap the Russians. Only at the last moment did Bennigsen become aware of his danger and withdraw.

The main column, under Napoleon, came upon the Russians at Eylau toward the end of the day (Feb. 6). There was a contained, but vicious, fight for the town of Eylau; the intensity of the fight was, no doubt, due to the fact that the winner would be able to spend the night in the town, rather than the frozen countryside. The French prevailed.

The next morning, the battle began in earnest. The Russian artillery, which outnumbered the French almost 2-1, started a bombardment about 8 A.M. Since the corps of Ney and Davout were still on the road, the French were outnumbered. To disguise this fact, Napoleon put the Guard, usually kept in reserve, in the center of the front lines. Soult probed the Russian right, but was roughly handled and pushed back easily. Napoleon knew that Bennigsen would realize his weakness and counter-attack Soult. He decided on a pre-preemptive attack with Augereau's corps on the Russian left. The result was a disaster.

Augereau's corps started off in good order, but a snow squall came up that blinded and disoriented the entire corps. When visibility improved, the French found themselves marching 90 degrees off course with their flanks near the muzzles of masses of cannon. The cannon, followed by the Russian infantry, all but demolished the corps.

The French were now in a very bad position. To try and save the day, Murat's cavalry corps was ordered to charge the center of the Russian line. What followed was one of the great cavalry charges of all time. The cavalry sliced through the entire Russian army, turned around, and slashed back through it again. The attack paralyzed the Russians long enough so that Davout had time to join the fight.

Davout's corps deployed on the French right. Soon after contact, they were rolling up the Russian left flank. Just as it appeared that the Russians would be trapped in a pincher, Lestocq's Prussian corps appeared. Lestocq had been keeping Napoleon's other column under Ney occupied. The Prussians had been able to slip away from Ney and now, they appeared to save the day for the Allies. Lestocq smashed into Davout's now-tired troops and drove them back.

As night fell, Ney joined the battle. He did some damage to the Russian right, then fell back to secure the French left.

Both armies had been badly mauled. It is unlikely that either side wanted to continue the fight. Napoleon "won" the Battle of Eylau when Bennigsen withdrew during the night (probably due to the fact that Napoleon had two relatively fresh corps: Ney's and the Guard). Napoleon stayed in place for a couple of days so that he could claim a victory, but no one who knew the facts could be fooled. The French lost close to one-third of their force and the Russians about one-fifth. No general could afford many such victories.

(Continued on page 34)

LEADER ORGANIZATIONAL TABLE: Allies

Bonus	##	Size	Name	Sup	##	Size	Name	Sup
10	30	Arm	Bennigsn	61	45	Div	X	44
7	31	Cor	Tolstoi	30	46	Brg	X	45
7	32	Div	Osterman	31	47	Brg	X	45
7	33	Div	Kamensi	31	48	Brg	X	45
10	34	Cor	Tutchkov	30	49	Brg	X	45
8	35	Div	Gallitzn	34	50	Div	X	44
9	36	Div	Samoff	34	51	Brg	X	50
12	37	Cor	Sacken	30	52	Brg	X	50
8	38	Div	Anrepp	37	53	Brg	X	50
8	39	Div	Essen	37	54	Brg	X	50
9	40	Div	Docturov	37	55	Brg	X	50
12	41	Cor	Lestocq	30	56	Brg	X	30
9	42	Div	Krieg	41	58	Cor	X	30
8	43	Div	Wurst	41	58	Cor	X	30
	44	Cor	X	30	59	Div	X	30

ALLIES

Russians

(Nat = 10)

Bennigson

#	Unit	Men	Skr/ Guns	T1	T2	T3	Weap	Max. Eff.	Eff	OP Mod.	Rein Turn	Sq	Mel
	Tolstoi												
90	Staff A	100	0	0	0	0	3	9	98	4			1
91	1TO/C	500		1	2	5	3	7	78	2			8
92	2TO/C	800		1	1	23	3	8	78	2			6
93	3TO/C	630		1	12	28	3	7	78	2			7
94	1TO/A	506	28	2	3	8	6	6	68	1			3
95	2TO/A	361	20	2	3	8	11	6	68	1			3
96	3TO/A	363	20	2	4	28	8	7	78	2			3
97	4TO/A	362	20	2	3	8	17	6	68	1			3
98	5TO/A	360	20	2	3	8	17	6	68	1			2
	Ostermn												
99	11	2000	200	0	14	20	0	5	54	0			3
100	1JG/3	900	900	0	9	22	0	6	68	0			2
101	2JG/3	900	900	0	9	22	0	6	68	0			2
102	3JG/3	899	899	0	9	22	0	6	68	0			2
103	13•	887	80	0	8	9	0	7	78	0			4
104	101C	898	81	0	8	9	0	7	68	1			4
	Kamenski												
105	15•	2000	200	0	14	20	0	5	58	0			3
106	17	2080	210	0	8	9	0	7	78	1			4
107	1JG/5	900	900	0	9	22	0	6	68	1			3
108	2JG/5	900	900	0	9	22	0	6	68	0			3
109	3JG/5	888	888	0	9	22	0	6	68	0			3
	Tutchkov												
110	1TU/C	900		1	1	23	3	7	78	2	2	3	5
111	2TU/C	900		1	1	1	3	7	78	2	2	3	6
112	3TU/C	900		1	12	28	3	7	78	2	2	3	6
113	4TU/C	1170		1	2	4	3	7	78	2	2	3	8
114	1TU/A	542	30	2	3	28	19	5	50	2	2	3	3
115	2TU/A	471	26	2	3	6	17	5	54	2	2	3	3
116	3TU/A	416	23	2	3	28	17	6	68	2	2	3	3
117	4TU/A	361	20	2	4	28	17	7	78	2	2	3	3
118	5TU/A	542	30	2	4	28	17	7	78	2	2	3	3
	Gallitzen												
119	1JG/7	900	900	0	9	22	0	5	50	0	2	3	2
120	2JG/7	900	900	0	9	22	0	6	68	0	2	3	2
121	3JG/7	1210	1210	0	9	22	0	5	58	0	2	3	1
122	19•	1621	160	0	8	9	0	8	88	1	2	3	4
123	21C	1500	150	0	14	20	0	7	78	0	2	3	2
	Samov												
124	23	2000	200	0	14	20	0	6	68	1	2	3	2
125	25	2000	200	0	0	21	0	6	68	0	2	3	3
126	27•	2000	200	0	8	9	0	8	88	0	2	3	4
127	1JG/9	900	900	0	9	22	0	6	68		2	3	2
128	2JG/9	840	840	0	9	22	0	6	68	0	2	3	2
	Sacken												
129	1S/C	900		1	1	23	3	6	68	2	3	4	5
130	2S/C	900		1	1	1	3	7	78	2	3	4	7
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142	JG/9	2000	2000	0	9	22	0	5	54	0	3	4	2
143	29	2000	200	0	12	20	0	5	54	0	3	4	3
144	31C	900	100	0	12	20	0	6	68	0	3	4	3
145	33•	900	85	0	8	9	0	7	78	0	3	4	4
146	35	900	50	0	10	28	0	4	40	0	3	4	2
147	37	560	60	0	11	21	0	3	38	0	3	4	1
	Essen												
148	39•	2712	280	0	8	27	0	7	78	1	3	4	4
149	41	2000	200	0	11	20	0	3	38	0	3	4	1
150	43	900	90	0	12	20	0	5	58	0	3	4	3
151	45	900	100	0	12	20	0	5	58	0	3	4	3
152	1JG/11	900	900	0	9	22	0	6	68	0	3	4	2
153	2JG/11	1300	1300	0	9	22	0	6	68	2	3	4	2
	Doctorov												
154	47	2100	200	0	14	20	0	6	68	0	3	4	2
155	49	2100	210	0	14	20	0	6	68	1	3	4	3
156	51	900	91	0	12	20	0	7	78	0	3	4	3
157	53•	900	93	0	12	20	0	7	78	0	3	4	3
158	1JG/13	900	900	0	9	22	0	5	58	0	3	4	2
159	2JG/13	840	840	0	9	22	0	6	68	0	3	4	2

Prussians

(Nat=11)

#	Unit	Men	Skr/ Guns	T1	T2	T3	Weap	Max. Eff.	Eff	OP Mod.	Rein Turn	Sq	Mel	RD
	Lestoq													
160	LQ/C	970		1	0	28	3	6	68	2	15	2	7	
161	LQ/A	407	22	2	4	28	17	7	78	2	15	2	2	Y
	Krieg													
162	8	900	900	0	9	22	0	6	68	1	15	2	4	Y
163	10	900	90	0	14	13	0	6	68	1	15	2	4	Y
164	12•	900	100	0	8	13	0	7	78	1	15	2	5	Y
	Wurst													
165	14•	1123	100	0	8	13	0	7	78	1	15	2	4	Y
166	16C	1120	120	0	8	9	0	8	88	2	15	2	5	Y
167	18	898	898	0	9	22	0	6	68	0	15	2	3	Y

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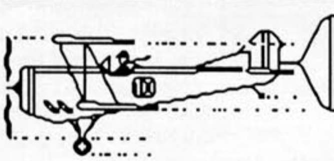
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Circle Reader Service #27

HAVE YOU BEEN SAVED?

by Steve Estvanik

Steve is the designer of RAM *and* The Civil War *for Avalon Hill Microcomputer Games, as well as the programmer of TSR's* Sniper! *for play on Compuserve.*

There's more to 'user friendly' than rodents, fast- dropping menus, and cute trash icons. It's probably more important in less showy areas like letting a player begin and end the game when s/he wishes. An amazing number of games ignore this simple concept. Despite a designer's imposition of an authoritarian, single-save system, I can still save my game, then quit and rename the save file. Or I can copy it to another disk, then resume the game and play on. If I die, I just go back to my copy. Now, though, I curse the programmer's user-hostile attitude that makes me work so hard to do what I want. (My first article for CGW, in fact, was a description of a disk swapping system to circumvent *Wizardry*'s early failings in this area.)

From a designer's point of view, if you want people to play your game more than a few times, you need to make it easy to explore and try different things. Not everyone has the time to play each game from the beginning. In addition, few games have any provisions for experienced players, so even after you solve all the early problems, you have to go back and do them over each time you want to play, unless there is a way to save 'advanced' positions.

Some programmers consider it cheating to not replay their game from the start each time your character is killed. As a game designer, one of my guiding principles has been to let the players decide what's cheating and what's not. It's incredibly frustrating to play a game in which you can die with a wrong keystroke after many hours of careful play. It's more frustrating when you can't reload a game saved from shortly before the fatal error to try again.

Naturally, the ability to save multiple games adds an additional task for the programmer. You must have a simple method for displaying available saved games and letting the player choose which one to save or restore. However, the additional code is minimal. Using Basic and the alternate screen pages on the IBM, you can produce clever displays with a few lines of code, using just the FILES command and the SCREEN() function.

Early sections of a game often become tiresome, even tedious. Most players would prefer to save a game after they've done the boring and repetitive parts and start right in with the interesting stuff on subsequent plays. This also says something about current game design. In a space game that requires you to repetitively explore, map and mine planets, for example, it would be nice if after the Nth play, you could let the computer take care of that in the form of an automated ship to do the fiddly bits while you concentrate on the more interesting aspects. Nevertheless, most games treat the player the same whether it's the first time through or the last.

It's important to remember, too, that the type of game will determine the type of saves that are possible. For an RPG type of game, the main program is a fairly simple loop, alternately executing player commands and events. A save facility can thus be called from almost anywhere (Figure 1). A wargame poses additional problems, since there are many distinct phases. Saving a game here is no harder, but restarting is tougher. Most wargames solve the problem by allowing saves only at certain logical places like the end of a cycle of movement and combat. (Figure 2) Usually this is no handicap, since any cycle takes only a few minutes to perform (As long as you can make multiple saves!).

Figure 1. Saving Pseudocode for RPG type games

```
if Restarting Saved Game then Read Save
    Game file
else Init Game end if End of Session = false
    while not End of Session
Process Monster Stuff Get Player Input
if Save Game Request then Write Save Game
    file
End of Session = true else Process Player
    Input
end if end while
```

Figure 2 Save game pseudocode for wargames

```
if Restarting Saved Game then Read Save
    Game file
else Init Game end if End of Session = false
    while not End of Session
Command Phase Get Player Input
Movement Phase Get Player Input
Combat Phase
if Save Game Request then Write Save Game
    file
End of Session = true
end if end while
```

Figure 3: Design of saved games for PBM use

Items in braces {} show computer phases that are always conducted.
Arrows indicate the disk is sent from player to player.
auto after a phase indicates that phase could be automated if the players choose.

```
Player 1                                  Player 2
loadguns/setsails/repair; Move orders
-------------------- file PBM1 ---------------->
              loadguns/setsails/repair; Move orders
                                 { move all ships }
                                       grapple auto
<------------------ file PBM2 ------------------
grapple auto
ungrapple auto
-------------------- file PBM3 --------------->
                                     ungrapple auto
                                       boarding auto
                               give fire orders auto
<----------------- file PBM4 ------------------
boarding auto
give fire orders auto
{fire broadsides}
{ melee }
```

At most, only 2 exchanges of disks are necessary. If the players decide to use the automatic grappling rules, then the exchanges using files PBM2 and PBM3 would not be needed.

One place where multiple saves within a turn is important is when we start to design play by mail (PBM) or play by electronic mail features into games. Now, players need to exchange disks or files during a turn. Figure 3 outlines the processing of a turn of PBM *Wooden Ships & Iron Men* as I'm currently designing it for the IBM version. The exact sequence of phases is modified, giving a slight asymmetry to the phases. This minimizes the number of times a disk changes hands in the course of a round, but the logical sequence of events remains the same.

The exchange required by the grappling/ungrappling routines can eliminated. If the autograppling feature is enabled, the computer will decide when and who to grapple. This will be most useful in the early stages when there are few grappling choices anyway, and most possibilities are your own ships.

So, you can start to see that some of the most friendly aspects of a game may be nearly invisible to players. The idea is to make the game as easy to play in as many ways as the player desires. Flexibility in saving games is a major help to learning, experimenting with, and ultimately, enjoying a game. **CGW**








C-64/128 Screens Shown

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Gotham Gazette
Special Edition

June 1,1989 | *All the News That Fits, We Print!* | *Price: 64K*

CAPED CRUSADER COMBATS CRIME

Commissioner Gordon Summons Batman!

Penguin, Joker Create Crime Wave!

The clouds reflected the famous Bat-signal as it shone brightly over Gotham City last night! "I had no choice but to summon Batman," Police Commissioner James Gordon told reporters in a press conference held today on the steps of police Headquarters. "The Joker and the Penguin are loose again and no one can handle those two except Batman!" Commissioner Gordon advised the public that the "cute" little robot penguins that are roaming the streets of Gotham City are part of the Penguin's hideous plan to take over the world.

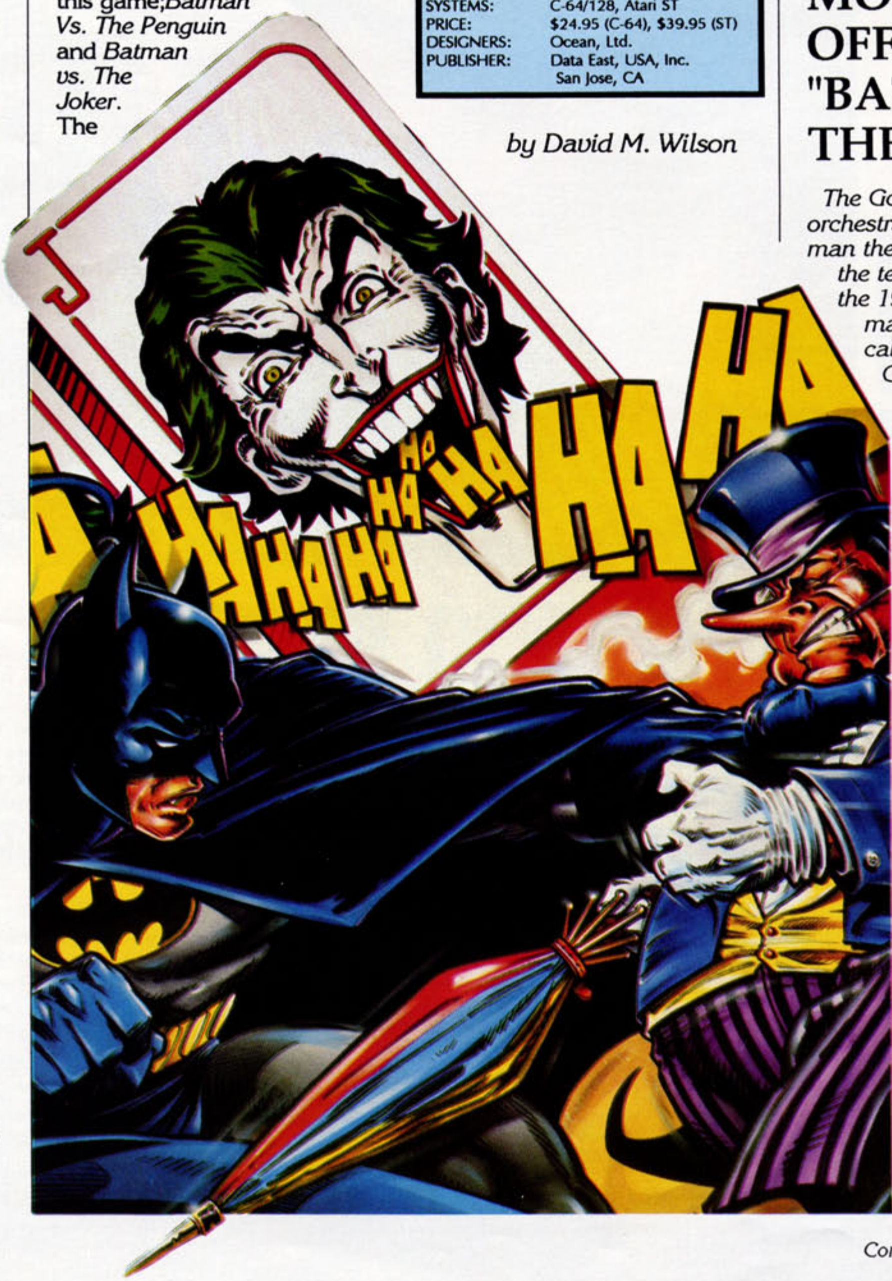
"Saints preserve us!" exclaimed Police Chief O'Hara when the commissioner admitted to reporters that Batman's arch enemy, the Joker had kidnapped Robin, the Boy Wonder. "The fiend even planted bombs in the city's sewer system."

Batman is up to the challenge in *Batman, the Caped Crusader*, a new computer game offered by **Data East** for the C-64/128 and the Atari ST computer systems. Data East wisely planned the release of this game to roughly coincide with the long-awaited Batman movie starring Michael Keaton which is scheduled for release this summer.

There are two scenarios offered in this game;*Batman Vs. The Penguin* and *Batman vs. The Joker*. The Joker scenario is the simpler and more interesting of the two. This reporter personally never cared much for the Penguin (Waugh! Waugh! Waugh!) as a villain anyway!

TITLE:	Batman, The Caped Crusader
SYSTEMS:	C-64/128, Atari ST
PRICE:	$24.95 (C-64), $39.95 (ST)
DESIGNERS:	Ocean, Ltd.
PUBLISHER:	Data East, USA, Inc. San Jose, CA

by David M. Wilson



MUSIC AND ART NOTES: GOTHAM PHILHARMONIC TO OFFER "BATMAN" THEME

The Gotham Philharmonic orchestra will play the Batman theme made popular in the television series of the 1960's. Tickets may be purchased by calling the Gotham Civic center.

The ST version of the Batman theme is a fairly reasonable rendition of the familiar tune. The C64's version is completely different. It's as if the conversion people didn't care, but just took a generic adventure tune and slammed it on the program. The C64 has the capability to play the Batman theme, so why didn't the programmers use it?

The graphics of both games are of high quality, especially the ST version. The programs operate via a series of comic book frame "windows" that give the game the look and feel of a Bat-

man comic book that players can manipulate.

BATMAN LOSES FALSE TEETH

A small group of pedestrians were confused yesterday when they observed Batman pulling a set of false teeth from his utility belt. "I guess they were his Bat-teeth," one observer commented.

The game will require players to guide Batman through a search for useful objects. For instance, in the Joker scenario, I picked up a fish and found I couldn't use it until I'd first used the false teeth. The fish and all foods restore a portion of Batman's life/courage/strength etc. which is slowly ebbing away. Some objects are no help at all. Don't bother putting on the Clogs (wooden shoes), because they will only slow Batman down. On the opposite end of the spectrum, the tennis shoes speed Batman up. Further, if Batman gets in a particularly hairy situation he can put on the false nose. Surprisingly, nobody seems to recognize him with the simple disguise on. Puzzling out the use of these and other objects keeps interest from flagging too quickly.

Players will have to stand right over the objects to pick them up. One quick hint: Batman does not need to stand directly over the bombs to disarm them. Just use the wire cutters from anywhere in the room.

GOTHAM CITY FAIR OPENS

The annual Gotham City Fair opened today at the Gotham Fairgrounds. Admission is $1.00 for adults and $4.00 for children. Paid admission entitles access to all exhibits and all rides.

The discriminating Batman fan will want to know why there is more than one Joker beating up on Batman in the funhouse. The Joker is a tough nut to crack, even when there's only one of him. But he is especially tough in this game. Every manifestation of the clown prince of crime carries a bowling pin to clobber Batman with. The failure of the documentation to explain the presence of multiple Jokers is unfortunate.

BUSINESS BOOMS FOR GOTHAM UMBRELLA FACTORY

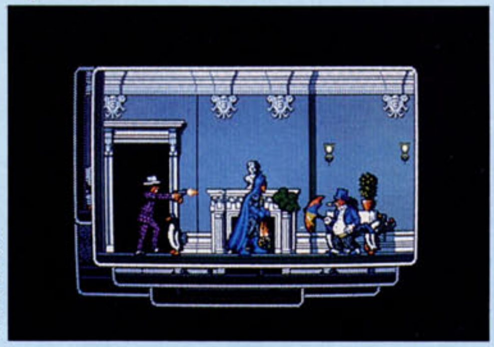
If the booming factory which just opened in the garment section of the city is any sign, the umbrella business is booming in rainy Gotham. According to inside sources, the new factory is operating around the clock.

In the Penguin scenario, Batman will have a hard time finding the Penguin's master computer. It is obviously at the umbrella factory, but the Penguin's henchmen will run our hero ragged as he tries to locate it. Batman's goal is to find the computer and destroy it. Don't forget to use the lift key to go downstairs.

EDITORIAL: IS BATMAN SLOWING DOWN?

None of us really knows exactly how old Batman is. We are sure of one thing, though, he's been around a long time. That may be the reason that simple henchmen are able to stand toe to toe in combat with the caped crusader lately.

Caped Crusader Captured on CRT



Atari ST Screen



C-64 Screen

Part of the thrill of "being" Batman is being able to do the extra-ordinary. *Batman, the Caped Crusader* is a wonderful maze game that keeps players searching for the correct objects and using them in the right places, but the game doesn't let the players experience the "feel" of being Batman. Our hero is not permitted to swing onto the scene of the crime with the Bat-rope and he spends more time running from the crooks than bashing them.

The idea of the game isn't to beat the crooks, it's to solve the puzzles. In fact, there is little advantage to be gained in slugging it out with henchmen. If Batman beats up a bad guy in the ST version, he wins a small morsel of food which he can eat for extra strength. In the C64/128 version, there is no advantage (no free lunch) to winning a fight. Therefore, it's usually best for Batman to stun his opponents and run before they revive and shoot him. Often it is an excellent strategy to duck into the next room and quickly duck back. The villains are almost always gone when you return. Does that sound like the Batman we know and love? There is also no appearance of the batmobile or the batplane, even though players do begin the game in the familiar surroundings of the Batcave, and get to use the bat-computer.

All in all, though, true batophiles will probably like this game even though it fails, in some aspects, to reproduce the crime-fighting/crook-stomping Batman that we expect. There is certainly enough "Pow!" and "Socko!" for most. **CGW**

—David M. Wilson











BLOOD MONEY

The ultimate arcade game

Hold it right there. Are you REALLY ready for this one? Have you got the courage to load up the experience that makes all the other games you've played seem prehistoric?

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But it's going to be tough. From the instant you hear that driving soundtrack you'll be plunged into a maelstrom of sheer destruction, as you plunder the four Outer Planets in a kamikaze quest for gold and glory. The aliens in **BLOOD MONEY** set some vicious traps, and it will take all your skills just to survive.

Use your awesome firepower wisely and you'll turn those aliens into blood money that can earn you extra weapons and equipment. And you're going to need them, because there are no easy screens in **BLOOD MONEY.** It's a life and death struggle that demands all your tactical genius and shoot-em-up know-how before you battle through to confront the four planetary Guardians.

With its vast bit-mapped graphics, superb animation, blistering sound, devilish obstacles, awesome firepower and 1 or 2 player options, **BLOOD MONEY** is the greatest challenge yet faced by any games player with a passport to outer space.

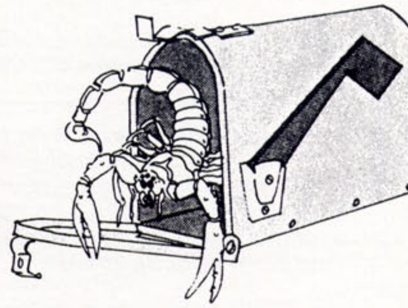
It's here. It's ready and waiting for you. But are you sure you're ready for **BLOOD MONEY?**

Two joysticks required for two-player game
Screen Shots are from the Amiga version

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Scorpion's Mail

Yes, we're here in the backroom again (I think I'll have to have the place enlarged; the crowd is getting bigger all the time). Before we get to the mailbag, however, a word (or several) about SASE's (self-addressed stamped envelopes). At the end of each column, I always make it quite clear that if you live in U.S., you *must* enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.

However, every month, without fail, in come 2-3 letters that do not include a SASE, or sometimes the envelope is there but no stamp. Please folks, before you send your questions off, make sure you have that SASE in there so you'll get a reply. Now, on to the games!

Battletech:

A lot of people are having trouble in the map room at the end of the game. As long as you have the manual, getting the password is easy. Take a look at the star map in there. You should notice that there is something that sets several of the planets apart from the others. Once you know what that is, you should have no trouble figuring out the password.

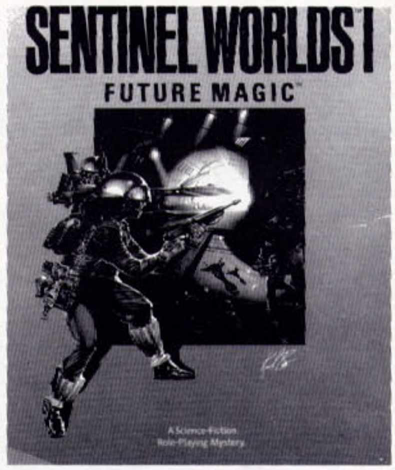
King's Quest IV

Quite a few folks have been struggling with the whale's tongue. It *is* a tough climb, especially if you don't start from the right spot, which is the far left. From there you want to go mainly on a diagonal until you reach top center. It just takes a lot of perseverance (and maybe a little luck, but it *can* be done). I've heard it's supposed to be easier with a mouse, but not having one myself, I can't confirm this. Also, several people have been wondering when, if ever, night will come. Well, you can wait around for it, but that does take quite awhile. It's much better to get the fruit for daddy (remember, that's why you're here in the first place?). Once you do that, nighttime will come right along.

Wasteland:

A number of adventurers have arrived at Base Cochise and found themselves unable to go any further. Don't bother about the computer inside. You can't do anything to it, or anything else you see there. What you really want to do is make a careful and thorough check of all the walls inside the base. That should help you on your way.





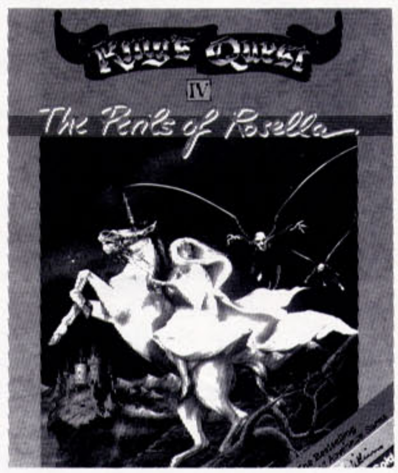
Bard's Tale III

The death's-head names in Tarmitia have been giving some folks a little difficulty. You get the first name in Berlin (just walk all around the place and you'll hear it). Then, you go through the various portals to the other time periods until you find the place where the name works. That gets you another name. You find where that belongs, you get another name, and so on, until you end up back in Berlin again with the last name. There is, of course, a lot of going back and forth until you have found all the names. On the other hand, if you are up on your mythology, you can bypass all that if you happen to know the name of the death's head in Berlin (Hint: all the gods are gods of war).

Wizardry V:

There is no need at all to go into the Mystery Playhouse at Manfretti's. Disappointing, especially since you have to pay to get in there, but true. You won't find anything important inside and you could very well end up with your party wiped

Continued on page 42)

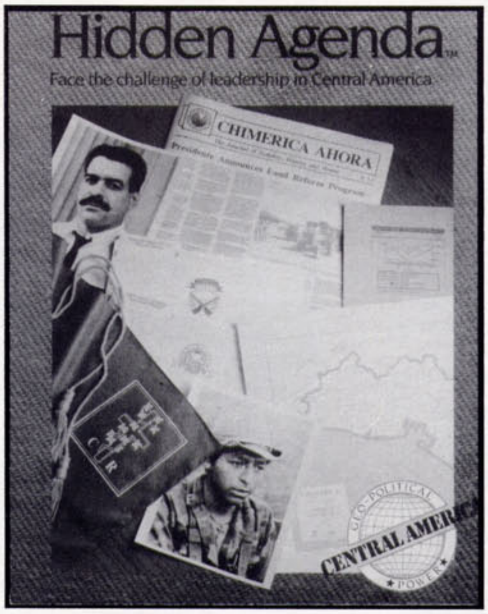


Hidden Agenda

Springboard Software's "Banana Republic" Simulator

by Dave Arneson

TITLE:	Hidden Agenda
SYSTEMS:	IBM, Macintosh
REVIEWED ON:	Macintosh
PRICE:	$59.95
DESIGNER:	Jim Gasperini
PUBLISHER:	Springboard Software, Inc. Minneapolis, MN



Dave Arneson is the co-designer of Dungeons & Dragons and a regular contributor to CGW.

Poyais, Chimerica (World Press International) -- Today marked the third anniversary of El Hefe's (The Chief's) rise to power in this small Central American Republic. Whether El Hefe and his communist allies will be in power a year from now is questionable. The state of emergency he declared early in his rule quickly became a state of siege. Today, Chimerica is a ravaged nation, torn by factionalism, debt, and war. The alliance that threw out the Farsantes is now at war with itself.

Viva El Presidente!

Opening *Hidden Agenda* brought dreams of again becoming El Presidente. Instead of the humorous board game *Junta* or *Coup D'Etat*-style Banana Republic approach I was expecting, I found something far more intriguing.

A lot of work and hard research is evident in this game. The portraits of some 30 'significant' personalities can appear during the course of the game. Each one of these NPCs comes with a full biography, as well as their own ideas of what should be done. From a pool of nine characters, three from each party, you pick your ministers and twenty-one other leading citizens offer opinions on various courses of action. Such actions will determine how successful your term of office will be.

You begin with a three party coalition and a mandate to rule by decree for three years. Your ministers reflect the different factions that divide the country. Since there is no possible way to keep everyone happy, you cannot simply steer the middle road and expect to succeed. Of course, there is no way to keep everyone happy in the "real" world.

Affairs of State (Game Mechanics)

The game is very straightforward. The rulebooks are helpful, but rarely needed after the first couple of games. A game can be played in just under two hours (Of course, it's even shorter if there is a coup!). You begin by answering three questions from a group of reporters. Your answers define your goals in the game, your "agenda" as it were. After your press conference, you enter the Presidential Palace.

Your office, an environment of windows and menus, is your world. Here, the first order of business is to review the nine candidates for cabinet positions and appoint four of these as Ministers of: Agriculture, Defense, Internal Affairs, and External Affairs. Each "candidate" delivers a comment and play proceeds.

Next, the program allows considerable flexibility. I usually begin by reviewing the nine progress charts that depict the state of the country. Then, I refer to the newspaper reports from the four different newspapers. Note that it is possible to begin with the "Newest News" and page backward. Since there is generally more than one report from each paper, it is a good idea to page back and study the background of the most current events. At this point, I usually consult with each minister and go over, at least, one matter.

Also, sooner or later, you will experience some *Encounters*. These dialogues represent the "heartbeat" of the people. Who you end up talking to is a matter of personal choice and intuition. In each encounter, one of your ministers will also be present. When the NPC presents his/her complaint, you can either: agree with them, refuse their request, or ask your minister for advice. You must then decide who to listen to. Sometimes, you can put the item on the agenda and consult with your entire cabinet.

A *Crisis* is similar to an encounter, except the NPC comes uninvited into your presence. As in an encounter, you have a minister in attendance, but unlike the previous activity, you cannot "put the item on a future agenda." You must decide what to do. Later, you may try to go back and revise the situation, if necessary.

In a *Coup* situation, you must decide whether to resist or not. Rarely will you really have much choice in the matter. I once had a right wing and left wing coup back-to-back. Fortunately, the army and people backed me up. My advice? Be nice to some part of the army. You will need them. The trick is not to become controlled by them.

The Middle of the Muddle (Strategic Note)

I found that taking any sort of extreme measures led quickly to problems. Further, treading the middle way is hard. The only times I survived in power were when I leaned toward the "pink" side of politics. Of the three parties, the NLF seems to have a definite edge. On the other hand, a Liberal position will also take its lumps. Such a government seems to prevent any right wing coups most of the time. Usually, this government sees an elections result with the NLF taking power.

Meanwhile On The Right (Strategic Note)

The Popular Stability party and the Christian Reform move-

ment are both pretty reactionary. Run the country their way and the National Liberation Front (guerrilla warfare) will be at your throat, Pronto!

My experiment in "Right Wing" political oppression ended in early coups and nasty judgments from history (the evaluation at the end of the game). U.S. backed "reactionary" efforts never seem to amount to much. So, an army run by the NLF seems to be a "good" choice.

The NLF's Gloria Jimenez Fleming seems to work well as the Minister of External Affairs. Her major problem is a real desire to get involved with the Eastern Bloc. Do this too early, however, and money will dry up from both Uncle Sam and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Using her, I found myself able to get economic aid from both the Eastern and Western blocs. It didn't last long, though.

The ministries of Agriculture and Internal affairs call for a moderate. You shouldn't use either a Right- or Left-wing NPC as Internal Affairs Minister when the game is early. No one needs Revolutionary Tribunals or Death Squads any earlier than absolutely necessary.

Talk Is Cheap (Game Hints)

When you talk to your cabinet, the ministers will generally want to talk about what they want to. Often the topics they raise will have nothing to do with their position in the cabinet. An NLF leader may be in charge of Agriculture, for example, but will want to talk about the army all the time. Be certain to only choose topics that *you* want to deal with.

Everyone has advice. Most advice supports a given NPC's personal position. In fact, some of the advice given by ministers seems designed to undercut a "weak" president. This "Bad" advice usually comes from ministers whose advice has been scorned in the past. Often, a minster who has had his advice repeatedly rejected will resign. They will never serve again and their faction becomes unhappy with you. Of course, simply following everyone's advice also gets you kicked out of office *mucho pronto*.

Whatever you actually decide to do, it is very important to remember that your decisions are not always followed. To find out what is really happening on an important decision, you will need to access the papers, talk to people outside the cabinet, or . . .

We Interrupt This Turn For A Potential Crisis!

The first few times I saw the message which indicates a potential crisis, I almost jumped through the ceiling. It is usually important, but not always. Some people *always* think anything they have to say is important. They are absolutely positive that they would make a better leader than you. Watch them!

A crisis means limited ability to make decisions. Often, you only have two choices and sometimes *none*. What you decide may quickly lead to another crisis. After a few games, you can see trouble coming and learn how to avoid some of the storms.

Revolutionary Limitations (Game Problems)

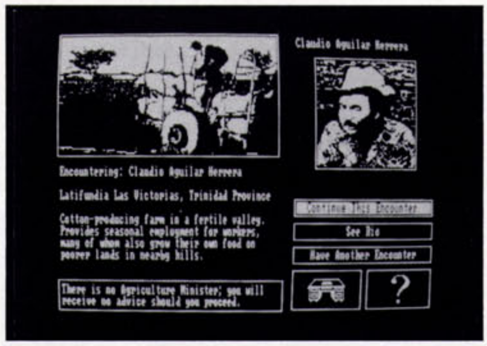
- The NPCs' biographies and secret agendas never change. The nine persons available for appointment as ministers are always the same and even their reactions can be predicted after a few games. The game could use more variation in these areas.

- Certain decisions seem to be set. For example, there *will* be price controls, no matter what, and cracking down on the right-wing Death Squads *always* leads to an attempted right-wing coup.

- Encounters with some individuals always have the same results. The leader of the landless laborers always says the same thing, no matter what you do!

- Relations with the U.S. almost always go bad quite early. The worst part about not "toeing the line" with the U.S. is that U.S. aid goes down the gutter. This aid being cut off is shortly followed by any IMF aid being cut off, as well. Without outside funds coming in, the bills pile up quickly and the U.S.S.R. will not effectively take up the slack.

This final consideration brings up an important thought. Is *Hidden Agenda* a simulation or a game with political statements? It is, of course, a political simulation, but it was also designed by people who made decisions somewhat subjectively about the game's play. It still stands well as a simulation. Of course, such set behaviors *can* be an advantage. As El Presidente, you do not place anything on the agenda by yourself. You need someone else to bring it up. Say, isn't the Rights Activist always in favor of getting rid of the Death Squads? Quick, have my secretary set up a meeting.



The "Hidden" Agenda

Technically, these are called NPC motivators. Some ministers will vote one way in council and act in their own interests, anyway. Thus, the NLF and the "Old" Army are always at each other's throats. In fact, some cabinet ministers will perform a three-sixty during a crisis and refuse to back you.

Some crises have only one answer. For example, if price controls are not instituted, it will cause up to 300% inflation and have angry workers marching in the streets. If you do institute controls, the "poor" people will riot and demand the controls be removed. This leaves you with the choice of calling out the army (not real useful in terms of building popularity) or agreeing. Then, comes the next "Crisis" and the trade union workers come into the streets demanding that the controls be re-imposed! To add insult to injury, the "Judgment of History" at the end of the game will say that you waffle a lot. This tends to make you feel manipulated by the game and that *isn't* good.

The Judgment Of History (Victory)

There is no clear-cut victory at the end of the game. After some twenty-odd games, I have been elected president twice and had my tenure extended once. Nevertheless, what you get at the end of the game is an analysis, written in the future, which examines your three years in office. It may not sound exciting, but everyone I know who has played the game has kept going back and trying to "do better."

The Judgment of the Reviewer

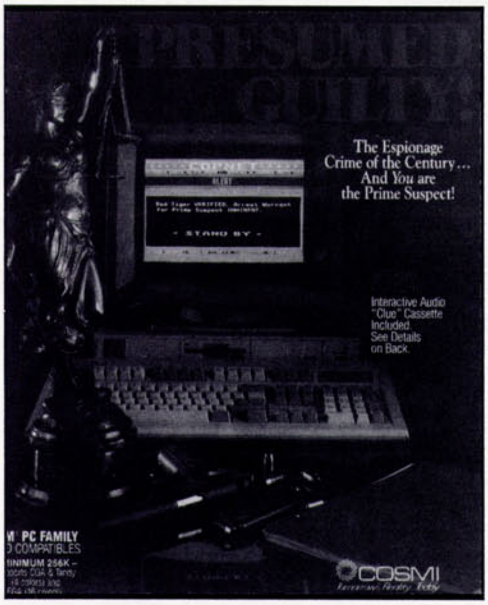
In my opinion, the game too often goes the way of Nicaragua. Personally, I think that the U.S. always coming across as a "heavy" is a bit much. To me, the game should be more than a political litmus test. Still, if you want a good (and deep) simulation game that will keep you coming back for more, you will definitely like *Hidden Agenda*. **CGW**

"Presumed Guilty"

Cosmi's Game of Real Time Intrigue

by Scorpia

Presumed Guilty is a sort of quasi-adventure set in the near future; 1996 to be exact. However, before you get around to playing the game, you have to make your way through some confusing instructions and an installation utility that doesn't work very well. If you intend to play on floppies, there is no problem. You simply follow the instructions in the manual. However, the procedure for installing the game on hard disk isn't quite what the book says.



TITLE:	Presumed Guilty
SYSTEM:	C-64, IBM
REVIEWED:	IBM
PRICE:	$29.95 (IBM), $24.95 (C-64)
DESIGNER:	Carrie Carroll Ray Hogue, George Johnson, and Paul Norman
PUBLISHER:	Cosmi Corporation Wilmington, CA

Hard Driving Game (Technical Difficulties)

What you should do is ignore the manual and proceed as follows: put disk 1 in the A drive and type SETUPH c: (or whatever your hard drive is if it isn't c). This will begin the installation, but you will probably encounter a difficulty when it asks for the second disk. Mainly, it will look at the second disk briefly, then ask for the disk "with the batch files". That is disk 1, as there are no batch files on disk 2.

So, put disk 1 back in the drive (or, you could just leave the first disk in after it asks for disk 2). When it has finished re-copying the files, put disk 2 back in your A drive and do a COPY A:*.* to get all the files from the second disk onto your hard disk. Note also that the directory created is called PG, not SIS as the manual states. You can't get around this by just using manual copy to get the files onto your hard disk. The setup does other things as well, and you have to go through the entire procedure outlined above to get the game properly on your hard drive.

There are further technical difficulties when it comes to restoring. There is no in-game save feature. In order to make a backup of your position, you first exit the game with the "logoff" command, which updates the relevant play files. Then you run a utility called BACKUPPG which creates a sub-directory (with the name of your choice) and copies the play files into it. To restore a position, you are supposed to run GOBACKPG (and the sub-directory name), which is supposed to copy the files back out. Unfortunately, GOBACKPG has incorrect syntax and the files don't get copied back to the play files. You can edit the GOBACKPG.BAT file to correct this, or you can just do a COPY SUBDIRNAME*.* to restore the files (which is what I did).

The Falcon Has Landed (The Story)

With the technical part taken care of, we can proceed to the story. The year is 1996. A new, world-wide computer police network, Copnet, has just been installed. You are a recently hired investigator for Copnet, waiting for your first assignment. Your initial task is to investigate the death of one Ray Lamonte, who was working on a very hush-hush assignment related to "Star Wars" weaponry. Poor Ray died in a car crash the previous evening, soon after receiving an award for his work in satellite laser weapons.

As the investigation continues, it becomes obvious that there is more to Lamonte's demise than was first apparent. You might say there is a conspiracy here (and you'd be right!). In fact, Falcon pops up to confirm the idea. Who is Falcon? Good question, because you *don't* know and you'd *better* find out. Falcon doesn't like Copnet. So, he frames *you* for murder. Of course, you'll eventually be found innocent, but the damage resulting from your conviction will be enough to cause Copnet to be taken down due to adverse public opinion.

It's nothing personal, of course. Falcon doesn't hate you. You just happen to be in the right (wrong?) place at the right time. Thus, while you're working on Lamonte's case, you are also trying to piece together Falcon's identity from clues Falcon gives you.

Every so often, Falcon interrupts proceedings to send you a little "lovenote" and show you that another letter in your logon password has been discovered (there are 20 letters in your password). If he gets all 20 letters before you finish your investigation, it's all over for you.

All your work is done from a computer terminal and is accomplished by the "Feedback" method. Basically, you feed back into the computer a lot of the information you get so you can obtain more information.

It is essentially a matter of being thorough and persistent, as well as patient, since some results take awhile to come back. There are also a number of photographs to look at. Make sure you always read the captions. On occasion, the important information is in the caption, not the picture.

A cassette tape comes with the game and contains fictional conversations obtained through wiretaps, satellite pickups, etc. It's a good idea to listen to the tape once or twice. If there are some things you can't make out, don't worry. You can always review transcripts in the game itself. The conversations on the tape are not in chronological order, so you may want to make notations concerning time and date in order to determine the flow of events.

You also get to play around with DNA imprinting. Eventually, your anonymous agents will obtain DNA samples from just about every suspect. These can be used to make forensic comparisons. For instance, scrapings taken from under Lamonte's fingernails might be matched up with the DNA samples from likely suspects.

(Continued on page 31)



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Computer Gaming W

The Categories

Strategy (ST): Games that emphasize strategic planning and problem solving.

Simulation (SI): Games based on first person perspectives of real world environments.

Adventure (AD): Games that allow you to take your alter ego through a storyline or series of events.

Role-Playing Adventures (RP): Adventure games that are based on character development (usually involving attributes).

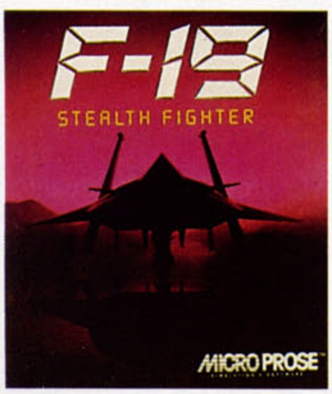
Wargames (WG): Simulations of historical or futuristic warfare from a command perspective.

Action/Arcade (AC): Computer games that emphasize hand-eye coordination and reflexes.

Top Role-Playing



Top Simulation



No.	Name	Mfg.	Machine	Cat.	Avg # Resp.	Rating
1.	**Dungeon Master**	**FTL**	**ST,GS,Am**	**RP**	**98**	**10.69**
2.	**F-19 Stealth Fighter**	**MicPr**	**I**	**SI**	**75**	**9.95**
3.	**The Magic Candle**	**Mndcrft**	**Ap,I**	**RP**	**20**	**9.90**
4.	**Ultima V**	**Origin**	**Ap,I**	**RP**	**135**	**9.73**
5.	**Romance/3 Kngdms**	**Koei**	**I**	**ST,RP**	**23**	**9.61**

No.	Name	Mfg.	Machine	Cat.	Avg # Resp.	Rating
11.	Might & Magic II	NwWrld	Ap	RP	51	9.30
12.	Bard's Tale III	EA	Ap,C,	RP	124	9.26
13.	Genghis Khan	Koei	I	ST,RP	41	9.22
14.	Battles of Napoleon	SSI	Ap,C	WG	33	9.18
15.	Airborne Ranger	MicPr	C,I	AC	94	9.17
16.	Pool of Radiance	SSI	Ap,C,I	RP	97	9.03
17.	Hostage	Mndscpe	Am,ST,I	AC	23	8.91
18.	NFL Challenge	XOR	I,M	ST	86	8.87
19.	Rocket Ranger	Cnmwre	Am,C,I	AC,AD	90	8.86
20.	Neuromancer	Intrply	Ap,C	AD	31	8.84
21.	Battletech	Infocom	Am,I	RP	48	8.77
	Fire Brigade	Panther	Am,I,M	WG	22	8.77
	Typhoon of Steel	SSI	Ap,C	WG	56	8.77
24.	Falcon	SpHlbyte	Many	SI	61	8.73
25.	Police Quest II	Sierra	I,GS	AD	43	8.65
	Zany Golf	EA	Am,I,ST	AC	31	8.65
27.	Jack Nicklaus' Golf	Acclde	C,I	AC,ST	28	8.64
28.	Sword of Sodan	Discvry	Am,GS	AC	27	8.63
	Nobunaga's Ambition	Koei	I	ST,RP	51	8.53
30.	Carrier Command	Rainbrd	Am,ST,I	AC,WG	49	8.51
	Panzer Strike	SSI	Ap,C	WG	68	8.51
32.	Silent Service	MicPr	Many	SI	257	8.50
33.	TV Sports Football	Cnmwre	Am	AC,ST	51	8.49
34.	Arkanoid	Dsc/Taito	Many	AC	69	8.38
	Wings of Fury	Brdbnd	Ap	AC	52	8.38
36.	Strike Fleet	EA	Ap,C,I	WG	79	8.37
37.	Leisure Suit Larry II	Sierra	I,GS	AD	52	8.31
38.	Modem Wars	EA	C,I	ST	24	8.29
39.	Manhunter	Sierra	I,GS	AD	72	8.25
40.	Police Quest	Sierra	I,GS	AD	98	8.23
41.	Starglider II	Rainbrd	Am,ST	AC	65	8.22
42.	Three Stooges	Cnmwre	Am,C	AC	68	8.21
43.	Battlegroup	SSI	Ap,C	WG	36	8.19
44.	War in Middle Earth	Mlbrne	Many	ST,AD		8.15
45.	Stealth Mission	Sublogic	C	SI	36	8.11
46.	Battlechess	Intrply	Am,I	ST	21	8.10
47.	Shiloh	SSI	Ap,C,I	WG	54	8.09
	Zork Series	Infocom	Many	AD	218	8.09
49.	Faery Tale Adv.	Micrill	Many	RP	59	8.07
50.	Russia	SSG	Ap,C	WG	61	8.05
51.	Sentinel Worlds	EA	I	RP	71	8.04
	Techno-Cop	Epyx	C	AC	23	8.04
53.	WC Leader Board	Access	Many	AC,ST	97	8.00
54.	Leather Goddesses	Infocom	Many	AD	136	7.99
55.	Breach	Omntrnd	ST,Am,M	ST,RP	114	7.98

orld's Top 100 Games

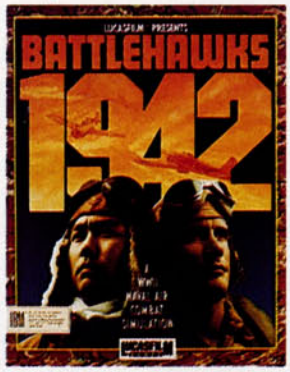
No.	Name	Mfg.	Machine	Cat.	Avg # Resp.	Rating
6.	**Red Storm Rising**	MicPr	C,I	SI,ST	53	9.57
7.	**Project Stealth Ftr.**	MicPr	C	SI	58	9.55
8.	**Wasteland**	EA	Ap,C,I	RP	127	9.50
9.	**Battlehawks 1942**	Lucsflm	I	AC,SI	55	9.35
10.	**King's Quest IV**	Sierra	I,GS	AD	75	9.31

No.	Name	Mfg.	Machine	Cat.	Avg # Resp.	Rating
56.	Enchanter	Infocom	Many	AD	115	7.97
57.	Jordan vs. Bird	EA	C,I	AC	47	7.96
58.	688 Attack Sub	EA	I	SI	39	7.95
59.	Wizardry V	Sir-Tech	Ap,I	RP	43	7.88
60.	Eternal Dagger	SSI	Many	RP	72	7.85
61.	Zork Zero	Infocom	M,Am	AD	20	7.84
62.	Rommel	SSG	Ap,C	WG	20	7.80
63.	Halls of Montezuma	SSG	Ap,C,I	WG	44	7.75
64.	Anc.Art War Sea	Brdbnd	I	ST,WG	108	7.74
	Phantasie III	SSI	Many	RP	105	7.74
66.	Phantasie	SSI	Many	RP	147	7.69
67.	Star Saga I	MstrPly	Many	AD	41	7.66
68.	Bard's Tale II	EA	Many	RP	166	7.64
69.	Grand Prix	Acclde	I	AC	46	7.63
70.	Sorcerer	Infocom	Many	AD	71	7.62
	Spellbreaker	Infocom	Many	AD	93	7.62
	Wizard's Crown	SSI	Ap,C,I	RP	133	7.62
73.	Dec. Battles III	SSG	Ap,C	WG	23	7.57
	Hitchhiker's Gde.	Infocom	Many	AD	198	7.57
75.	Demon Stalkers	EA	C	AC,AD	57	7.54
76.	Shadowgate	Mndscpe	Am,I,M	AD	66	7.53
77.	Quarterstaff	Infocom	M	RP	23	7.52
	Wishbringer	Infocom	Many	AD	81	7.52
79.	Legacy Ancients	EA	Ap,C	RP	134	7.50
80.	Planetfall	Infocom	Many	AD	139	7.49
81.	Battlecruiser	SSI	Ap,At,C	WG	42	7.48
82.	Reach for Stars	SSG	Many	ST	38	7.45
83.	Autoduel	Origin	Ap	RP	175	7.44
84.	Bard's Tale	EA	Many	RP	81	7.43
	Heroes of Lance	SSI	C,I,ST	AC,AD	77	7.43
	King's Quest II	Sierra	Many	AD	115	7.43
87.	Defender of Crown	Cnmwre	Many	AC,ST	253	7.39
	Steel Thunder	Acclde	C	AC,SI	41	7.39
89.	Lode Runner	Brdbnd	Many	AC	124	7.36
90.	Micro League BB	MicLg	Many	ST	137	7.32
91.	Zak McKracken	Lucsflm	I	AD	48	7.31
92.	Times of Lore	Origin	Ap	RP	63	7.29
93.	Crusade in Europe	MicPr	Ap,At,C	WG	81	7.25
	No. Atlantic '86	SSI	Ap,M	WG	40	7.25
	Paladin	Omnitr	Am,ST	ST,RP	71	7.25
	Space M+A+X	Final Fr.	I	ST	28	7.25
	Star Fleet I	Interstel	Many	ST	177	7.25
	War in So. Pacific	SSI	Ap,C	WG	53	7.25
99.	PT-109	SpHolo	M	SI	36	7.22
	Seven Cities of Gold	EA	Many	AD,ST	186	7.22

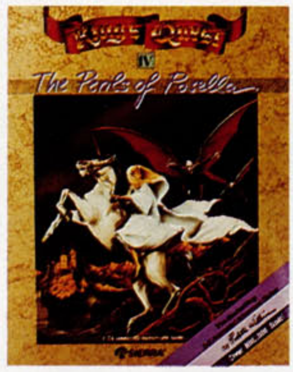
Top Strategy



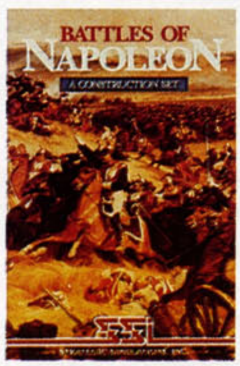
Top Action/Arcade



Top Adventure



Top Wargame





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(Continued from page 26)

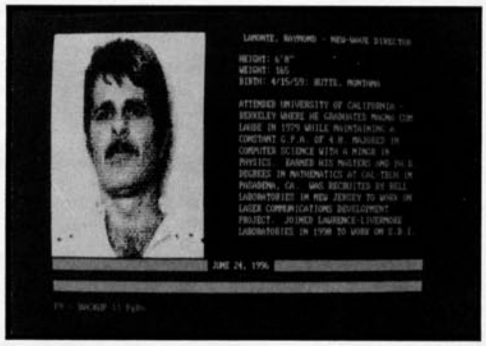
The best way to learn how to use the DNA comparison is to match a sample against itself. Move one strip until you get a positive match. Then move both strips together and see if they continue to coincide (you want the counter to show a .95 correspondence). If not, stop, move one strip again until you get a match and try again.

One thing you want to be careful about is not to investigate yourself too soon. When your name turns up as a suspect, there is a case file number with it. Entering that number shows you the evidence against you. This also triggers Falcon to start hacking your password. You don't want that to happen too soon, so hold off on looking at your own file for awhile. You must do that eventually, however, in order to set off new events that keep the game moving.

Then, there is UMBRA, the top security clearance available. Some information in the computer's data base requires the UMBRA password before it can be accessed. Make note when you receive a message stating "UMBRA clearance required," so you can enter the clues again later.

As you might expect, you don't know this password. No one is going to give it to you outright. You have to figure it out yourself. Falcon will drop a hint about it, but not until 19 letters of your password have been determined. That is a good place to save the game. Then, restore to an earlier position so you have some time to try breaking into UMBRA.

You only get three attempts at the password before a message comes in deactivating your terminal for attempting illegal entry. However, there is a way around this. Don't read the message. So long as you don't read the message, you can continue to work on getting into UMBRA. Once you have the password, you can return to your most recent save and enter it to read the top-secret stuff.



The problem is that the hint is rather ambiguous. There are a lot of associations with the final clue you get and you can spend quite a bit of time trying them all. To help reduce the possibilities, pay close attention to the news bulletin announcing the meeting between the president and the new Soviet First Secretary.

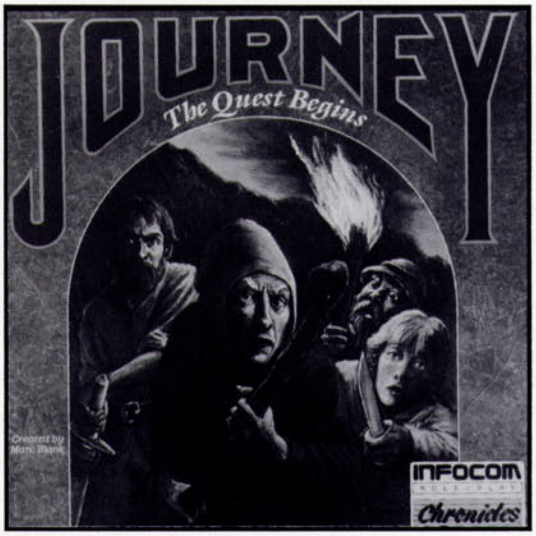
Overall, Presumed Guilty is a very unevenly-paced game. At the start, you have a lot of names to enter into the computer, and things seem to zip along. Then, you hit a dry spell and waste a lot of time waiting for results (real-time dead time). The most telling point against the game, however, is the fact that it does not seem to have been playtested through to the end. Having finally tracked down the Falcon's lair, and transmitted an arrest warrant, I sat back to await results. They weren't what I expected.

(Continued on page 54)

Long Play's Journey Into Light

Infocom's Tolkienesque Adventure Game

by Roe R. Adams, III



Roe is co-designer of Wizardry IV: Return of Werdna and contributed to the design of Ultima IV.

A shadow of evil has fallen over the land. No, this is not the beginning of *Lord of the Rings*, but of **Infocom**'s marvelous new game, *Journey*. The game does pay an acknowledged homage to J.R.R. Tolkien's classic epic throughout the story, though.

TITLE:	Journey
SYSTEMS:	Amiga, Macintosh
REVIEWED ON:	Macintosh
PRICE:	$49.95
DESIGNER:	Marc Blank
PUBLISHER:	Infocom Cambridge, MA

A black evil has arisen, threatening to cancel out the world. Four stalwart adventurers leave to save civilization. Along the way they must find four stones held by each of the non-human races: blue for Nymphs, green for Elves, brown for Dwarves, and, naturally, red for Wizards (We have always suspected that they were a race apart from mankind). The four stones lead to the two other stones which, in turn, reveal the secret hiding place of the "one stone that rules them all!" Trees talk to you, orcs want your body parts, and dwarves lead you through an underground citadel where an unspeakable ancient horror lies awaiting in the depths. The only items missing are the drums!

All the time, the party is coaxed on by the master Wizard, Astrix, who prods, cajoles, and provides hints about what the party should do next. He also dies spectacularly whenever the party makes a major mistake and allows evil to win. Now, *that* is motivation to restore the game and try again!

Note, though, that only the veneer of *Journey* is Tolkienish, for this game heralds the long awaited return of *Zork* impresario, Marc Blank, to what should be the best seller list. (Gaming Historians will please note that after much heated debate, a panel of experts has finally determined that *Border Zone* was actually written by Sir Francis Bacon). *Journey* is full of delightful puzzles, superb prose, and finely honed legends that will be a challenge to all levels of players. The flavor of the puzzles harkens back to the Golden Age of **Infocom** Adventures, and reflects Marc's long standing status as a Master Designer. Ah, the Mill mines, the underwater pools of the Nymphs, and the entire town of Zan, all await those players who love fine puzzles.

The game begins with our party of four adventurers, already in place as the game begins. If, however, any character's name is truly offensive to the player, he may be given a new one. Bergon is the big fighter, a good fellow to have in a fracas. Praxix, the novice Wizard, has a pouch of reagents for casting spells. Esher is the physician whose powers of observation provide timely insights at crucial moments. The narrator of the story is Tag, an apprentice food merchant, who keeps track of inventory for the party. Nowhere are Tag's features or talents really discussed, but you just know from the feel of the character that he has Hobbit blood in him somewhere.

The jump-off point for the journey is the small town of Lavos. The town boasts a general store, run by a jolly fellow named Webba, and the obligatory tavern. Be sure to thoroughly peruse Webba's store, noting any travel posters hanging on the walls. It should be observed that, unlike many other adventure games, *Journey*, has no excess items. Every item that is not nailed down in this game (and an occasional item that *is* nailed down) is essential to solving a puzzle somewhere along the line. The tavern is full of the usual small town beer guzzlers who are very suspicious of outsiders. The party has to nose around a bit to find anyone who will talk to them.

Outside of Lavos, the road forks. Here is the first challenge of the game, for without an experienced guide, members of the party start dying like flies. Were you one of the clever players who secured the services of the disreputable guide, Minar, back in Lavos? If you could not decide whether to hire such an obvious rogue or not, consult the back of the game box (whoever reads the back of boxes!), where it plainly states, "You'll share the adventures of Tag, Praxix, Bergon, Esher, and Minar as they solve puzzles . . . "

This might be an Infocom first, printed hints on the back of the box.

The fork in the road is where decisions begin and it is appropriately named as *Journey*'s storyline is constantly forking into different bewildering arrays of "what ifs." The player is strongly advised to keep a very large collection of well notated Save Games. These will come into numerous uses as the story unfolds and the player frequently slaps himself on the forehead while exclaiming, "Oh no, so I was supposed to keep track of [fill in the blank]." Only judiciously placed Save Games will avoid the frustration of having to replay *Journey* all over again to reread a special legend or note a particular event in detail. Any player who has a printer is highly encouraged to print out all of the rather lengthy,

but interesting, legends. A piece here and a subtle piece there is often needed much later to solve a puzzle.

Journey would be a good text adventure game, but what elevates it to the dizzying heights of a major work is Marc's innovative command structure. No longer is the player chained to yet-another-clever-parser. In this game, almost everything is a Mac-like point and click. Each location brings up a fresh series of options for the player. Choosing one option may negate other possible choices or open up a whole new set of options. Sometimes, an important option will be in bold type, other times it won't. It is really important that the "Look Around," "Examine," and "Scout" options be chosen whenever available, although please note that sometimes Scouts get captured and don't return! Such occasions are good spots to Save Game before venturing onward, just so the many flavors of paths can be checked out thoroughly. "Get Advice" can solicit all sorts of interesting comments and further options.

Other games have tried icon clicking before, so what makes *Journey* so innovative? The answer lies in the manner in which the different options light up and go away as the game flows along. There is a very subtle, almost hypnotic effect that sweeps the player along. You notice yourself staring intently at the command screen every time you select an option, because you have no idea what new options your action might cause to spring forth. If you are not careful, you will lose control to the game. In fact, you will probably plunge down some clever dead end and Astrix will, yet again, die flamboyantly.

A word about "Dead Ends" is necessary. Amusingly enough, the manual emphatically states, "There are no 'dead ends' in *Journey*." Actually, the game has many erroneous paths that lead to the victory of Evil and Astrix taking the big plunge from his high tower. Certainly, each of these paths may be construed as a "Dead End"!

No game is perfect and there are three cautionary notes about this one. First, really watch what spells you use to solve a puzzle. The quantities of each reagent (earth, fire, air, and water) are very limited, and new sources appear at rare intervals. Several of the puzzles allow solutions utilizing any of several spells. If the player does not consult his pouch's inventory to see the current levels of each reagent before casting the spell, the players may box themselves into a corner later on in the game. The Second area concerns the puzzle of how one speaks Elvish. The solution to this puzzle practically necessitates either an eidetic memory or printouts of the legends. Even then, the player must make a fairly long leap into the realms of logic to come up with the composite answer that is needed. Third, and last, is the puzzle of the Wizard's Runes over the door. This puzzle is at least several orders of magnitude below the calibre of every other puzzle in the game. The player's should just type in singularly each word in the rune phrase until they hit upon the correct one, and ignore any thought about figuring out why, the effort would be greatly wasted.

Graphically, the game excels. Unlike previous **Infocom** efforts that dipped their toes into the graphic waters, *Journey* takes the plunge. Propelled by Donald Langosy's superbly sensitive graphics, the game lives and takes on three dimensionality. The graphics do not need the gimmick of animation to be impressive. Every new scene has a totally new graphic and some areas where action occurs have multiple graphics. For those elite who have access to a Mac II, there is an extra diskette just for Mac II color graphics. The graphics fairly leap off the screen at you. Breathtaking, indeed!

Unlike Bilbo Baggin's journal, Tag's story can not be called "There and Back Again," because it does not end with this game. In the finest gaming tradition, this release is only Part One of the "Golden Age Trilogy."

In this reviewer's opinion, *Journey* is the best effort to date of any game designer struggling to find a new way for the game to interface with the player. It goes a long way to breaking down traditional preconceived notions about how games should be structured. However, because it is so totally innovative, **Mediagenic**'s marketing division (**Infocom**'s



parent company) was apparently hard pressed as to what label to apply to the game, so they coined yet another new one: Role-Play Chronicles. While it is doubtful whether any consumer will be able to remember the fine distinctions that separate all these adventure game marketing slogans from one another, players should ignore the hype and buy "The Beef". **CGW**

(Continued from page 15)

The Battle of Eylau

"Artillerie, Faire Feu!" (The Scenario)

Type	French	Allies
Inf	65,864	66,010
Cav	13,250	11,130
Art	262	508

There was no way to simulate the snow squalls that periodically showed up during the battle. Except for the absence of lakes and streams, then, this scenario might be taking place during the summer. To simulate the highly successful cavalry charge, the melee factor was made high for the cavalry, as was their chance-to-charge factor. The infantry is less likely to form squares, as well. Apparently, the snow and hard ground made it more difficult for infantry to defend themselves against cavalry.

Whether the game is a board game or computer game, it is difficult for the designer to force the player to use the Guard historically. In fact, Napoleon rarely used the Guard. It was always there as a threat, but its use was usually either as a last resort (Waterloo) or as a *coup de grace* (Ligny). The gamer wants to use these powerful units early and often, but that is ahistorical.

I experimented with activating the Russian forces more slowly, which would have not only simulated history better, but would have allowed for a more see-saw battle. The French chewed up the pieces, however. The computer general has no sense of marshalling forces and will send units in against impossible odds. Keep in mind when designing scenarios that the computer forces should be pretty much intact and not have to do any fancy maneuvering.

CGW

Weapon/Range Table

	Weapon	1	2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-12
0	Mus	3	1	0	0	0	0
1	Rif	3	3	2	0	0	0
2	Crb	2	0	0	0	0	0
3	Sbr	1	0	0	0	0	0
4	12G	17	8	6	2	0	0
5	9G	13	7	4	2	1	1
6	8G	12	6	4	1	0	0
7	6G	9	5	2	1	0	0
8	4G	7	4	1	1	0	0
9	3G	5	3	1	1	0	0
10	2G	3	2	1	0	0	0
11	H24	19	7	4	1	0	0
12	H5.5	18	6	3	1	0	0
13	L18	16	6	3	2	1	1
14	H10	14	5	2	1	1	0
15	L9	13	5	2	1	1	0
16	H7	11	3	1	1	0	0
17	H6	10	3	1	1	0	0
18	12/24	18	8	5	2	0	0
19	12/10	15	7	4	2	2	1
20	12/6	13	6	4	2	1	1
21	12/18	16	7	4	2	0	0
22	GHL	14	6	4	2	1	1
23	8/7	11	5	2	1	0	0
24	6/9	11	4	2	1	0	0
25	3/6	7	4	1	1	0	0
26	6/9L	11	5	3	1	1	1
27	9/5	15	7	3	1	0	0
28	6/5	13	6	3	1	0	0
29	4/5	12	6	3	2	1	0

Eylau Set-Up

Use the standard tables except as indicated below.

A) 31 Turns
B) 2/8/1807, time = 12 (6AM)
D) Use Weapon/Range Table
J) Change "Square As Target" to 180
M) Change Victory Levels Table
O) Set cavalry charge at 90
P) Set square formation at 110

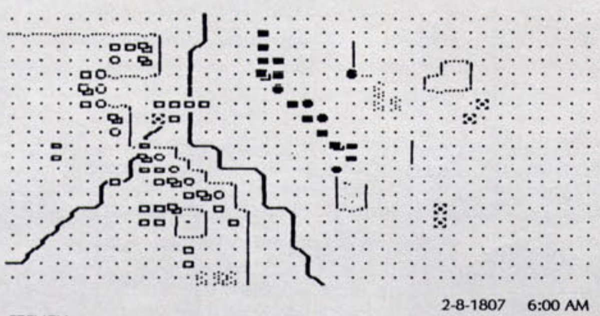
Victory Levels Table

Victory Level	Range VP
French Major	-99999 to -8001
French Minor	- 8000 to -2001
Draw	- 2000 to 1999
Allied Minor	2000 to 7000
Allied Major	7001 to 99999

Fire Mode Modifier Table

Mode:	Firing Unit:	Target Unit:
Line	100	100
Col	30	150
SQR	30	180
Chg	0	100
CChg	0	100
Limb	0	80
Ulim	100	40
Norm	60	110
Rout	50	60
Dsmt	75	70
Open	60	80

Scenario Deployment



2-8-1807 6:00 AM

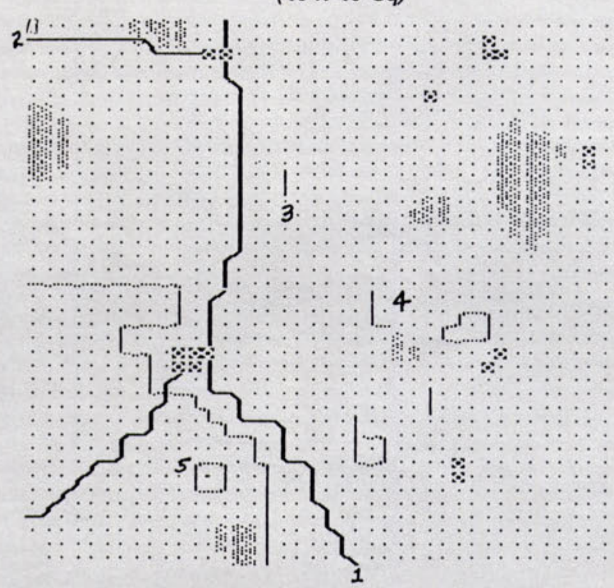
FRENCH
Soult: Hillaire in Eylau (11,24)
Leval on hill near (9,21)
Legrand on hill near (5,23)

Augereau: Desjardin on hill near (13,31)
Heudelet on hill near (10,29)

Davout: near (10,32)

RUSSIANS
Tolstoi, with Osterman on the right and Kamenski on the left: on the line (17,19), (17,22), (23,28)

EYLAU MAP
(40 x 40 Sq)



OBJECTIVE FRENCH

13,0	1400
4,18	200
20,34	200
19,17	300
19,3	600

OBJECTIVE ALLIED

0,36	1600
4,18	700
20,34	700
19,17	400
19,3	300

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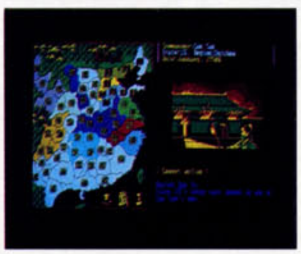
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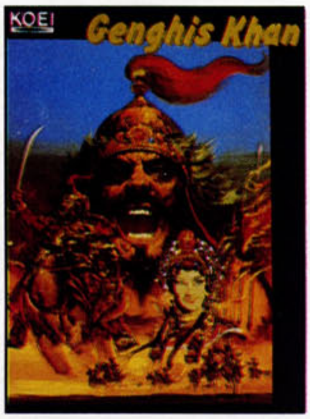
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Abstracts from the Journal of Computer Game Design

Pac-Man™ = Zork™

by Chris Crawford (Balance of Power: 1990 and Guns & Butter)

In this article, Chris described the possible actions which could take place in a game as a "gametree." This series of branching points corresponding to actions was previously called a "storynet" by Chris. The thesis point of the article is that the structure of a story is linear, but the structure of a game is more complex. He notes that a single playing of a game constitutes a traversal of the game tree, hence it is structurally identical to a story. Indeed, a game might be called a "story-generator," since it creates a linear story in the playing. Further, he observes that the number of possible stories (i.e. possibilities of replay) depends on the complexity of the gametree. A scrawny tree structure generates very few replays, while a bushy tree structure generates an abundance of replays.

There are two primary approaches to creating gametrees: the "hard-wired" and "soft-wired" approaches. The former uses a tree structure where each node specifies the situation in which the player's character finds himself, as well as the graphic/sound environment, options open to the player, and the consequences of choosing each option. Assuming that each node provides the player with exactly three options and no two options lead to the same consequent node, a gametree with 1,000 hard-wired nodes would only last six turns and offer only 729 possible results.

The soft-wired approach uses a maze approach to spatially track the player's character through the gametree, but assigns enough state variables to a given situation that a single maze junction can generate an exceptional amount of choices. Using Pac-Man as an example, the state variables would be: eaten or uneaten food dots, position of the ghosts, used or unused power pills, and whether the player character is empowered or not empowered. Because of these variables, there can be numerous situations to be encountered each time the Pac-Man character reaches a given location. Any of these variables can be relevant at any point in the maze.

Crawford compares Zork to Pac-Man by noting that each room is a node with the range of possibilities open to the player's character being dependent on the state variables (i.e. does he have the book, the candle, or whatever?). Nevertheless, Crawford observes that whereas any variable may be relevant to any point in the Pac-Man maze, some variables are completely irrelevant to some of the rooms in Zork. To avoid the irrelevance limitation, Crawford suggests that designers try to make as many of the state variables function significantly at each juncture in the game.

In conclusion, the article suggests that a maze structure, whether in an adventure or arcade game, provides a useful sensory format for reducing the options available to a player to a manageable number and gives visual form to the number of state variables available. Hence, the effort put into establishing state variables will have a mathematically significant effect on the gametree itself. The more relevant the variables (in terms of both effect and presentation to the player), the richer the game experience.

Culture, Idealism, and the Real World

by Jim Gasperini (Star Trek: The Promethean Prophecy and Hidden Agenda)

Picking up on the themes of past issues (which stated that the key to the future of computer games would be the creation of interesting, engaging characters and that game results should be crafted in such a way that they expand the significance of the conclusion), Gasperini noted that *Hidden Agenda* was completely driven by character interaction. He suggested that it was possible to have characters which exist in a believable culture in *Hidden Agenda* because he did not have to develop the culture from scratch. Rather, he attempted to model a real-world culture. Therefore, there is plenty to "talk" about with the NPCs, as well as a shared understanding of the environment being modeled.

In addition, *Hidden Agenda* uses dramatic conflict to shape the game (as opposed to combat, spending, and puzzle-solving). The player doesn't initiate events as much as he reacts to them. Further, the game utilizes a non-linear plot where making the same choices may lead to different results depending on the ministers in the cabinet or the mood of the populace.

Finally, the expanded ending for the game where the "Verdict of History" prints out a record of the player's decisions/actions in an encyclopedia format expands the ending. As Gasperini notes: "It is largely up to the player to decide if he or she won. . . . Thus, we present a text compilation that you must interpret for yourself. . . . Though many people will likely feel that they 'win' if they are elected to stay in power and that they 'lose' if they are voted out, the Verdict may make them wonder if such a conclusion is always warranted."

How to Expedite Conversions

by Gregg Tavares (Gregg is a programmer at Cinemaware and worked on Gunship for Microprose.)

Asserting that "It has been my experience that converters and conversion houses will always do the minimum amount of work required to get the product finished," Tavares presents a set of recommendations for expediting and improving future conversions. First, developers should write clean code with the machine-dependent code separated from the machine-independent. Second, every keypress should call a function. Then, the programmer needs only to replace that function rather than searching through the entire program for every time that key is accessed. Third, developers should set aside special routines for drawing to the screen. This will enable converters to easily see what variables get passed where. Fourth, comment the code. Each routine should be commented with a description of purpose, variables used, inputs utilized, and variables produced or changed. Using these techniques, converters can be assured of doing the best possible job on the target machine with a minimal amount of guesswork. **CGW**

The Rumor Bag

by Garth Fitzmorris, Esquire



I was told with emphatic certainty that I was visiting the only supermarket in the United States where a bag of chips would cost hundreds of dollars. So, there I was, standing in the middle of a **Frye's Electronics Store**, surrounded by large screen televisions, circuit boards, PC compatibles, modems, software, potato chips, soft drinks, panty hose, candy, and magazines. Yes, you read the list correctly. I had been tipped to this unique blend of consumer electronics and consumables by a top game designer.

This Silicon Valley-based chain would surely be frequented by industry insiders . . . I thought. So, I lurked about the aisles, seeing and hearing all. I was not to be disappointed. One well-known computer "nerd" was picking up the last 2400 baud modem on the shelf. "I'll need it for playing Dan Bunten's new game from **Microprose**," he said. "They haven't even announced the title, but it's sure to be multi-player and played via modem. Besides, I want to be ready for the network version of **Maxis Software**'s *SimCity*." He probably didn't realize that there is no firm deal, as yet, but the network version with a map of the United States on the network is being discussed between **Maxis** and a major player in the consumer telecommunications field. Players would design their cities off-line, then upload the basic design to the map. There, the cities would interact on the county, state, regional, and federal levels. Current events would even come into play. Mississippi flooding, tornadoes, droughts, and blizzards would affect all cities in the geographical region.

Suddenly, a horrendous wall of sound impacted my eardrums. Someone was testing the maximum decibel delivery of a stereo system and the sounds of "There's a Barbarian in the Back of My Car" filled the store. This reminded an **Epyx** employee I know to talk about a distributor in Canada who has refused to stock their new *Axe of Rage* game because the packaging is perceived as offensive. He said the campy barbarian (an actual model who was "made-up" for the photo session by a **Lucasfilm** make-up wizard) apparently presented a screaming berserker with homicidal tendencies all too well for the Canadian wholesaler.

I passed by an aisle that looked like a massive electronic *Erector Set*, idly wondering what could be constructed out of all those assorted circuit boards and chips. Talk about a puzzle! It's probably something like the new puzzle series from Cliff Johnson, creator of *The Fool's Errand*. The first disk is called *At The Carnival* and all the puzzles revolve around that theme. To me, though, assembling all those components would be something akin to the creation of the world. Speaking of creation, **Electronic Arts** is finally about to release *Populous* in the U.S. *Populous* is a real-time strategy game hit from Europe where the players fight cosmic battles from a quasi-divine perspective.

As I reached the computer section, I noticed suspicious activity around a PC compatible. I don't know where security was, but a fellow pulled a 3 and 1/2 inch diskette and asked if I wanted to see some screens from *Robot in the 21st Century*. It is a pure shoot-'em-up built around a berserk robot theme which features VGA graphics and extremely fast sprite-driven graphics. The game is being developed by **Atomic Entertainment** for release later this year. This could be a big year for VGA graphics with *Questmaster I* (formerly called *Dondra*) and *F-15 Strike Eagle II* also supporting the VGA technology.

We were disturbed in our viewing by an irate IBM owner who had cornered the saleswoman near the software shelf and was demanding to know why the store had Amiga and Atari ST copies of *Empire* and didn't have any IBM versions. "It was CGW's Game of the Year fer gosh sakes!" he complained. She explained that it was sold out and there would be more by the next week. He didn't seem satisfied, so I stepped between then and explained that not only would the store have *Empire* in IBM format, but that the C-64/128 version was almost ready to ship. In fact, **Interstel** claims that *Dragon Force* and *Star Fleet II* will actually ship by Fall of 1989. In addition, I informed him, **Interstel** has acquired the license to several works by Andre Norton, including *Witch World* and *Space Queen*.

Space seems to be a popular subject these days. **Atomic Entertainment** has a space opera style RPG in the works; most of the coding on **Origin**'s *Space Rogue* is completed; and **Mindscape** is hard at work on their *StarTrek* title. Shift gears a bit and the science fiction fans will be stimulated by **Interplay**'s *Mean Time*, the working title of the time warrior game described in April's "Rumor Bag," and **Origin** has changed the name of *T.A.N.C.*, the cybertank game where players pit customized nuclear tanks against each other's vehicles, to *Omega*.

Unfortunately, I had forgotten to check my briefcase at the door, so it had to be searched. I guess I wouldn't make a very good spy. Apparently, Ivan and Carol Manley do make good spies because their real-time Espionage game set around the Berlin Tunnel and the Roman aqueducts nearby sounds very interesting. **Accolade** will entitle it *The Third Courier*.

I felt like a real spy, however, when I left the store following behind two fellows talking in guarded whispers about Sandy Peterson's move to **Microprose**. "If he worked on horror modules at **Chaosium**, you can bet he's working on a horror game at **Microprose**," one said. The other said, "Yeah, and I bet plenty of companies want to talk to **Chaosium** about the *Chthulhu* license." "It would make sense, wouldn't it?" the first one said, "After all, pen and paper games do seem to translate well to the computer." I snickered to myself. One thing is for sure. Sandy won't tell them.

I followed them for a little while and figured out that one of them must have something to do with **Electronic Arts**, since he referred to the upcoming RPG, *Kief the Thief*, along with *Knight School* and the *Thieves' Guild* license. The other one was probably from **Sierra**, since he knew that the name of Roberta Williams' new game is now *The Colonel's Bequest* and the latest Al Lowe product has been renamed *Passionate Patty*. He said that the company didn't think Polyester Patty would communicate as well as *Leisure Suit Larry*.

Well, I'm obviously not a very good spy, because the one from **EA** stopped, turned around and asked, "Aren't you Garth Fitzmorris?" I admitted that I was and asked how they had discovered me, "Was it my flawless British accent?" They laughed and shook their heads. "You were the only one in the store with a bag over your head." Maybe I'll use that *Ninja* mask **Activision** sent, next time. **CGW**

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(Continued from page 23)

Scorpion's Mail

out. If you do happen to be stuck in there, you have to look for the way out. Make sure you search in the small room at the end of the corridor. One of the four rooms has a wire you can trip to get your party out of this deathtrap. Since there's no way to tell where you are, you just have to keep searching until you find it. On the other hand, the Ballroom *is* important, so don't overlook that place.

Manhunter:

Some folks have been stumped by Trinity Church. Yes, it is very important in the game (for more reasons than one). However, until you have been completely through the museum, it's not likely that going to church will be of much use to you. Remember to look at everything carefully in the last room of the museum. Also, for those who are losing their heads at the pawn shop, the secret of Trinity should provide some relief.

Ultima V:

Getting past the first room of dungeon Shame has been a problem for quite a few people. This is one place where throwing things at the walls won't do anything for you. To find the secret trigger, you're going to have to push with your own little hands until you find the right spot. Don't be afraid to climb over the rocks. Be persistent, and you'll soon be on your way. Also, in the final dungeon, the true path to Lord British begins in the room with the sandtraps. Of course, you'll have to wipe out everything in the room before you can find the ladder (heh).

Future Magic:

I've heard from a number of people who have been having problems getting past the guard with the thermocaster in the battlestation. This one is a bit tricky, but if you time it right, you can remove the guard with no danger to your party. What you need to do is use your "erase skill" ability as soon as you see the guard appearing on your screen (just make sure the guard is targeted first or it won't work!). It may take a few tries until you get it just right, but it can be done.

Leisure Larry II

There are some folks who are having a little trouble getting out of the airplane, since the door is locked. That's probably because they didn't chow down back at the airport.

That's it for this look in the mailbag. Remember if you need help with an adventure game, you can reach me in the following ways:

On Delphi: Stop by the GameSIG (under the Groups and Clubs menu). On GEnie: Visit the Games RoundTable (type Scorpia to reach the Games RT). On The Source: Send SMail to ST1030. By US Mail (remember the SASE if you live in the US!): Scorpia, PO Box 338, Gracie Station, New York, NY 10028.

Until next time, happy adventuring!

 CGW

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STARGOOSE. The equipment: The new top secret fighter, codename STARGOOSE, packed to the hilt with every weapon imaginable. The assignment: Steal the power crystals from the eight cities on the planet NOM. But watch out! The rolling landscape is covered with machine gun nests, laser pill boxes, automatic rocket launchers, and pre-programmed robot attack vehicles. Fuel and ammo will go like crazy, so be ready to steal more from the storage tunnels under the cities. Absorb yourself in spectacular 3D graphics, as you climb, dive, dodge and twist your way along the alien landscape. The aliens await your attack. Come back with the jewels or don't come back at all!



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New From SPINNAKER

Ars Gratia Pecuniae (Art for Money's Sake)

Art vs. Profit in Computer Game Design

Dan Bunten closed his presentation which reminisced about the "Golden Days of Computer Games" by stating, "The golden days are not what's behind us. They are yet to come." It may be true, but the Computer Game Developers' Conference held in Sunnyvale on May 7-8 demonstrated that there was not quite the unanimity in design philosophy that the earlier and more intimate gatherings seemed to indicate. At this conference, pen and paper designers contended that programmers should *not* be designers; developers debated art vs. profitability; publishers and developers hotly discussed an inevitable schism between dedicated game machines and disk-based systems; and a software publishing executive candidly noted during a panel on marketing, "You guys probably think of marketing people as the *Darth Vader*s of this industry, anyway."

In spite of divergent opinions, this conference is still the most fecund and stimulating environment in the history of an infant industry. It is not surprising that an industry which is zealously attempting to accelerate consumer acceptance would have widely disparate visions of the future.

Game Machine vs. Computer

The battle for the consumer's loyalty will largely be fought on the battleground of the hardware platform to be used. Kelly Flock of **Mediagenic** insisted that the idea of a dedicated game machine would not go away. It may change, but he believes that there will be both a "home mainframe" (traditional computer which can be programmed for productivity) and game machine (platform strictly for entertainment). He does not believe visions of a "New Hollywood" (computer entertainment with the cultural impact of film and recorded music) will reach fruition until a dedicated game machine is widely accepted. Greg Riker of **Electronic Arts** believes that, as early as 1991, "The seeds from the split of dedicated game machines and the home computer will bear fruit." He projects a machine where optical media will be the storage of choice and dedicated co-processors for video and audio will accomplish the work. Many developers and publishers see these machines as the salvation of the entertainment software industry after the recent downturn.

Stuart Alsop, respected industry pundit, takes a different tack. He says that videogames are *not* the problem in the current profitability malaise. What developers need to realize, plan for, and use to their advantage is that computer entertainment is a different business than videogames. Personal computer based entertainment will *always* be a *niche* market rather than a mass market. He stated in the keynote address that consumer electronic companies (i.e. companies focused on mass-market acceptance of electronic products) will never understand the personal computer business and that computer companies will never understand consumers. The challenge, according to Alsop is to live between the two worlds. His analysis is that the big hardware companies are about to do just the right thing for all the wrong reasons. **IBM**'s endorsement of DV-I (see CGW's "Inside The Industry" for May, 1989) portends a machine with CD-ROM (CD-ROM with extended architecture to be standard), *Windows* interface, improved graphics, and a digital signal processor. "One hot box," he notes, to be sold at $2,500-$3,000 when the price stabilizes. He also projects a low-cost Macintosh at half the cost of the projected IBM home computer.

The projected split between dedicated and open game machines brought no summary evaluation as to whether products designed on future game machines would really be able to offer the depth and sophistication of games on the current hardware. Lord British noted one constant that will continue to plague the industry for a time, whichever way the hardware goes, "The cost of production [of computer games] is going up, while the profitability is going down."

The Art of Designing War

Ian Trout and Roger Keating from **Strategic Studies Group** chaired several conferences. Perhaps the most interesting was the discussion about designing wargames. With wargame sales dropping dramatically in recent days and shelf space tougher to acquire, **SSG** has three possible solutions. First, the company is revamping the IBM graphics for all future conversions. The first American Civil War release on the PC has the best scrolling we've ever seen in a wargame, crisply defined unit icons, extremely representative terrain (that not only looks like a map, but can be adapted via a more powerful Warpaint or Deluxe Paint II to make other terrain) that is dynamic (shows snowy weather in IBM *Russia* and destruction when a city or building is destroyed).

Second, the company has taken a leap in artificial intelligence during the work on the Napoleonic series. The concept to be utilized is a "Staff Card," roughly analogous to a "Hypercard" stack. The card will contain about 250 possibilities for the unit it is assigned to. At each "hour" in the game, the artificial intelligence will decide what the Corp will do and will look at the condition of the entire Army, the condition of the Corp, and the "Staff Card." With this data in hand, the unit will evaluate the 15-16 possibilities that would be possible (out of the 250 total) in a given circumstance. A value is added to each decision so that the intelligence will prioritize on the basis of what has gone before and a randomizer is added to keep matters from becoming too predictable. Then, the intelligence re-evaluates.

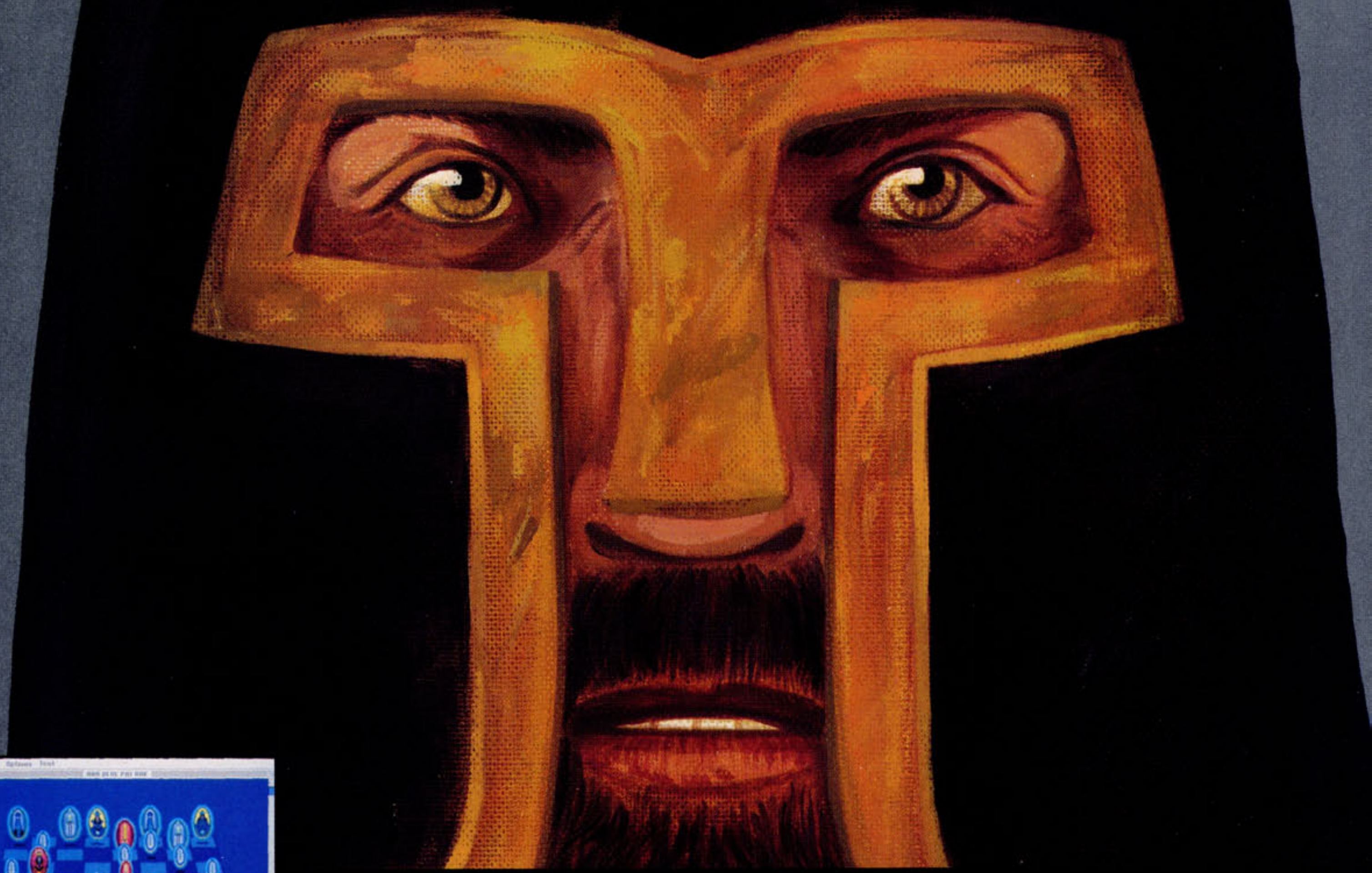
Third, the company is about to distribute its first non-strategy game, *Fire King*, with an aside that it does not use the **SSG** command routines. Nevertheless, Trout demonstrated that the command structure could easily be used in non-war games, leading one to believe that consideration has been given to doing just that. Nothing definite has been confirmed with regard to such products, however.

Interactivity—Salvation or Seduction?

Once again, Chris Crawford evangelistically extolled the virtues of interactivity with regard to computer games. Those who have read the abstracts from *The Journal of Computer Game Design* occasionally printed in *CGW* will be familiar with the basic tenets of Crawford's interactive gospel: the need for a robust language for the player to communicate with the program and related problem of context, as well as the necessity of

(Continued on page 55)

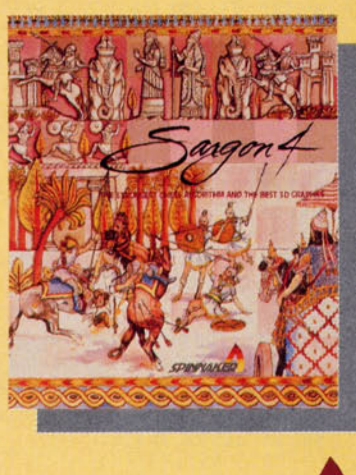
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SPINNAKER

(Continued from page 7)

players can pick n' roll, alley-oop, and slam dunk their way through this fast paced, two-on-two game. Features include officials, quarterly stats (to keep track of your triple-doubles), and a training sequence where players receive instruction from Magic and the chance to practice his moves. IBM ($39.99). Circle Reader Service #12.

Medalist International
180 Lakefront Drive
Hunt Valley, Maryland
21030

KEITH VAN ERON'S PRO SOCCER: Indoor and outdoor soccer comes to the home computer with this good looking action game. Overhead 3-D views give the game a sophisticated look. Smooth horizontal and vertical scrolling keeps the ball constantly in view. Players have a variety of shots to use, and the indoor version provides rebounds off the boards. The outdoor version comes with a weather option. Up to 16 can control their own teams, so a World Cup Tournament can be organized. Handicapping and instant replays are also part of the package. This looks like the best soccer game yet! One or two players, joystick(s) required. C-64 ($34.95). Circle Reader Service #13.

Mastertronic
711 W. 17th St., Suite G9
Costa Mesa, CA 92627

RAW RECRUIT: Elite basic training is the order of the day as players must survive six challenging tests. Desert Terrain Rifle Shooting, Cross Country Obstacle Course, Fitness Training, Commando Assault Course, Pistol Range, and Tug of War stand in the way of graduation. Joystick required. C-64 ($9.99). Circle Reader Service #14

SKATE CRAZY: Gaining the admiration of your roller-skating peers is the goal in this joystick driven action game. Players increase their "Street Cred" by performing dare-devil stunts and free wheeling tricks while skating through increasingly difficult levels. Players can also pick up trash along the way which can be recycled for cash. See, roller-skating is not a crime! C-64 ($9.99). Circle Reader Service # 15.

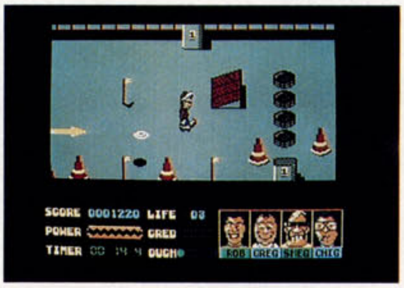
STREET FIGHTING MAN: The Crips and the Bloods aren't anything compared to the street-wise thugs you'll meet in this sock em' up action game. Players control Nick "The Hammer" who, armed only with his fists and an overblown sense of machismo, must fight his way through the alleys, bars, and loading docks of the five most dangerous cities in America, in order to rescue his girlfriend from the hands of the gang lords. IBM ($14.99). Circle Reader Service #16.



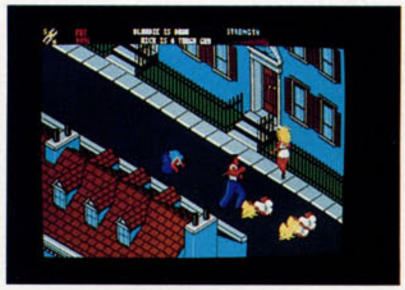
Keith Van Eron's Pro Soccer



Raw Recruit



Skate Crazy



Street Fighting Man



Thunder Blade



Turbo Champion

TURBO CHAMPION: Another game in the road racing genre, players maneuver their high-performance sports car through 8 different raceways, avoiding crack-ups with other cars and the typical assortment of oil slicks and roadside obstacles. A special feature allows players to construct their own tracks with the included Course Designer which works in conjunction with Deluxe Paint II. IBM ($9.99). Circle Reader Service #17.

Origin
136 Harvey Road
Building B
Londonderry, NH 03053

TANGLED TALES: A rich and humorous storyline coupled with an elegant interface marks this beginner/intermediate level adventure game. The player leads a wizard's apprentice through a series of quests in which he/she gets involved with a number of odd-ball characters. The adventure's interface sports a unique blend of both the first person, 'dungeon' view and the *Ultima*-like overhead viewpoint. Apple II pictured and C-64 ($29.95). Circle Reader Service #18.

(Continued on page 50)



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SPINNAKER

Fantastic Voyages IV

The Whirlwind Tour Inside the Entertainment Industry Continues









Noah Falstein and Doug Glenn of Lucasfilm stand around the Skywalker Ranch version of the water cooler./ "Historic" nine-year -old ranch house at Lucasfilm./ "Wild Bill" Stealey and his wild and crazy co-pilots./ "Miss Microprose" struts her stuff./ Al Roireau, Microprose Q/A, takes a break from the grueling task of testing Microprose games./ The design team at Microprose during their annual Ozzie Cadenza Appreciation Day.

The peripatetic editorial staff of CGW continues its whirlwind tour of many of the software companies. The purpose of these visits and reports is to share the human story of the work environment and people behind the scenes that produce the games and creativity tools we all enjoy. This issue, the story continues . . .

Interactive Light & Magic

Lucas Valley Road weaves through the forested hills outside San Rafael like a skimmer bobbing through the forests of Endor. As we cruised through the valley (named for another and unrelated Lucas), we wondered if the beautiful scenery may have inspired the famed forest chase in *Return of the Jedi*. Our car paused briefly before the inauspicious ranch gates (who would guess that an entertainment empire rested in the hills beyond?) and our pulses accelerated as the gates opened and the car advanced into the magic realm known as Skywalker Ranch.

We drove by the oft-pictured ranch house and parked under the "stable." Each building at the ranch is part of a fictitious "history." The "stable" houses the **Lucasfilm Games** division; the "winery" is actually the technical building; and the "egg ranch" functions as the archives, while George Lucas' office, the library, private viewing room, and company dining room are all located in the main house. The rich oral tradition which provides the story behind the house is as elaborate as any screenplay **Lucasfilm** has brought to the screen.

For example, the original **Lucasfilm** property (**Industrial Light & Magic**'s initial headquarters) was located in a building which once housed an egg company. One architectural feature of that building was a catacomb of cool tunnels where eggs had been stored. When Lucas built the ranch, he wanted something that tied the origins of the company into its present locale. That is why the corporate archives recreate that look with its own tunnels.

Yet, the reality subtly impinges upon the fantasy. If one is observant enough, it is possible to see an ethernet plug inset in the magnificent Victorian window seat located in the main house. If one enters the "winery," one finds the technical facilities necessary for foley shots (overdubbing) and a sound stage so perfect that singers often rehearse their concert tours at the facility (Mick Jagger was rehearsing a tour during one CGW visit and Linda Rondstat was cutting an album during another visit). Most Victorian mansions wouldn't have a private theater constructed out of recycled wine casks either, but the main house has one where the bouquet of a historic wine aromatically fills the air on humid afternoons.

It is not difficult to indulge in the fantasy when one enters the library, however. The library not only houses an N. C. Wyeth original, but an impressive Maxfield Parrish, as well. In fact, **PBS** viewers would recognize the stained glass window in the library as the background for the late Joseph Campbell during the *The Power of Myth* series. Not only does the library contain enough resources to keep the film division busy, but it serves as a seminal resource for the games division and **Industrial Light and Magic** (the special effects divison), as well. Noah Falstein, designer of *P.H.M. Pegasus*, remembers that he was doing some general reading in the ranch library when he conceived of the hydrofoil simulation.

In general, the working environment at **Lucasfilm Games** is as quiet, creative, and productive as George Lucas himself. The atmosphere is so close to nature that it is not uncommon to have king snakes sliding under the doors from the hillsides which the complex is nestled

against. As we paused over a quiet lunch in the Solarium, Doug Glenn, the Director of Marketing for the games division who left the high-pressure world of advertising to join the **Lucasfilm** team, suggests that "Working in an environment like this could work two ways. You could become so laid-back you don't accomplish anything *or*, what usually happens, is that you love it so much you don't want to take a chance on blowing this one. Here, you can put in 12-14 hour days and not feel it."

As for George Lucas' paternal presence over the game division, it is the founder's intent that the company focus on four quality titles per year (ideally, one per quarter). Lucas is involved with the games division in three ways. First, he regularly looks at product and offers his opinion as to when they are "good enough." Second, he personally oversees the licenses of the film products (**Lucasfilm** doesn't always publish the games based on the hit films.). Third, he participates in the game division's "Blue Sky Conferences" where future products and innovations are discussed.

In 1989, **Lucasfilm Games** is expected to publish a follow-up game to *Battlehawks: 1942*, the computer game version of *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (where Indy undergoes his own quest for the "Holy Grail"), and an adventure game by ex-**Infocom**er Brian Moriarity (tentatively entitled, *Loom*). The over-all impression of visiting the ranch is that the company is serious about attempting to shape story and technology together without being "seduced by the dark side of the force," whether that be marketing forces or technical expedience.

Whether intentionally or not, George Lucas is building an entertainment empire. As Cindy Williams reminisced at a recent awards dinner honoring Lucas, "After we finished filming *American Graffitti*, I remember loaning George the fare to take the ferry back to his home in Marin County. The next time I saw George, he *owned* Marin County." Whatever the future of this company, it is likely to expand the definition of entertainment, whether focused through computer software or film.

Samurai War Hero (Cheatin' Death with Major Bill)

Although the company was almost called Smuggers Software (for Sid Meier Users Group Software), the identity of **Microprose** as a company is almost as completely tied up with super salesman/CEO Bill Stealey as it is with designer/programmer extraordinaire Sid Meier. Appropriately enough, both founders of the company met over a video game, the coin-op *Red Baron*. It is appropriate because **Microprose** not only publishes games, but has a houseful of dedicated gamers. Designers, programmers, Major Bill, and staffers from any part of the company take part in after hours role-playing games, play-by-phone war games, and computer games. Some designers, like Arnold Hendrick, arrived at **Microprose** via the boardgaming route.

In addition, the meeting of Meier and Stealey over a *Red Baron* game was extremely appropriate because "flight" is the keystone of **Microprose** and flying is in Stealey's blood. Everyone at Martin State Airport knows the brightly emblazoned T-28 named, "Miss Microprose," and nearly everyone stops what they are doing to watch her taxi down the runway. CGW's editor-in-chief, Russell Sipe, performed his first aileron roll in the plane during one trip, while associate editor Wilson opted for more rudimentary flight training during the same outing. The CGW editors both agreed that "flying" computer simulations helped them in handling the

(Continued on page 53)

(Continued from page 46)

SJP Enterprises
P.O. Box 246
McHenry, IL 60050

THE DESERT WAR: Players fight the WWII North African Campaign in this computer wargame for the Mac. The game features four scenarios, (including a campaign game), armor, infantry, artillery, and hidden movement. This game is designed for two players (no computer opponent is available). Mac ($34.95). Circle Reader Service #19.

Spinnaker Software
One Kendall Square
Cambridge, MA 02139

THE SCOOP: The player gets an opportunity to be a top reporter in 1930's London, in this graphic and text adventure game based on a murder mystery by Agatha Christie and other members of the famous London Detection Club. The player must question witnesses, follow suspects and search for clues as he races against other reporters from a rival paper. An easy to use interface makes this game play smoothly. Apple 128K pictured and IBM ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #20.

Strategic Simulations, Inc.
1046 N. Rengstorff Ave.
Mountain View. CA 94043

HILLSFAR: The latest Advanced Dungeon & Dragons action adventure game has the player questing for increased skill, gold and magical items. The action events include Archery, Maze Exploration, Arena Combat, Lockpicking, and Equestrian Challenges. Characters are transferable between this game, Pool of Radiance, and Curse of the Azure Bonds. C-64 ($39.95). Circle Reader Service #21.

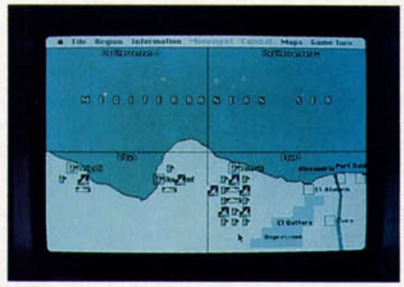
OVERRUN!: This is a modern land warfare simulation based on the game system developed for Panzer Strike! and Typhoon of Steel. Set in 1992, the game has new and near-future weapon systems, eight scenarios and a construction kit. Also included are larger sized maps, new armor types, increased accuracy of fire-control, and counter-battery fire. Apple II pictured and C-64 ($49.95). Circle Reader Service #22.

subLogic Corp.
501 Kenyon Road
Champaign, IL 61820

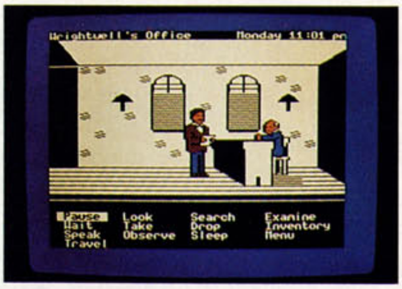
THUNDERCHOPPER: Not to be confused with the **ActionSoft** C-64 title, this new product is completely compatible with the entire line of **SubLogic** scenery disks. The player gets to pilot a high-performance rescue/attack helicopter in this flight simulator. Pilots fly training missions before going into action on land or at sea. Missions include: Armed Escort, where the player guides his troops through enemy territory; and even a Rescue at Sea, which requires finding and recovering survivors of a major naval engagement. IBM ($49.95). Circle Reader Service #23.



Tangled Tales



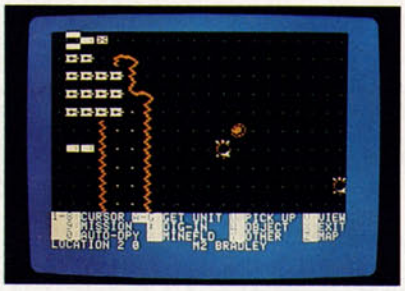
The Desert War



The Scoop



Hillsfar



Overrun!



Thunderchopper

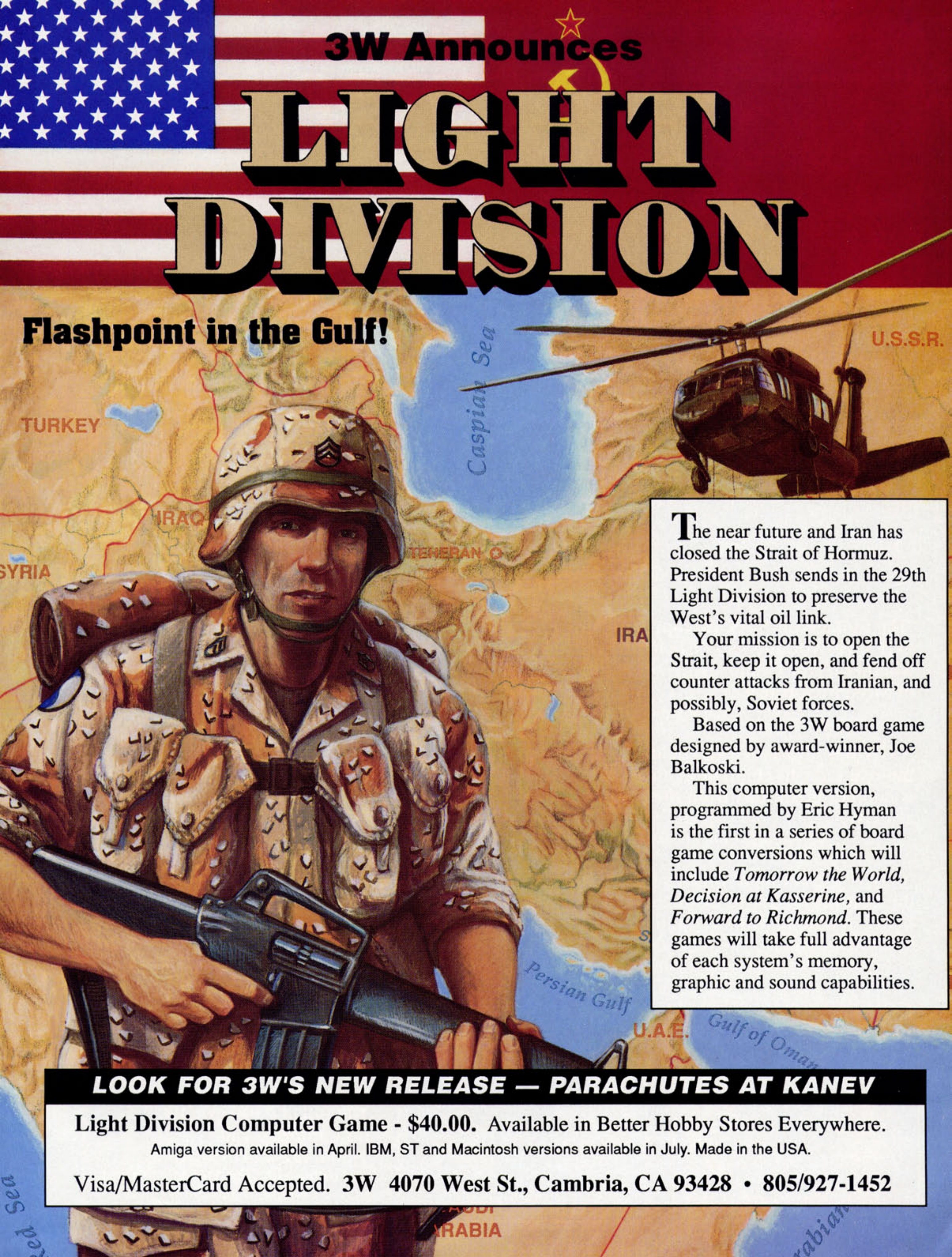
Abracadata
P.O. Box 2440
Eugene, OR 97402

RUN YOUR OWN TRAIN: Last month, by mistake, we ran a photo from Run Your Own Train, and mislabeled it as Design Your Own Train. We apologize for the confusion. As always, mass firings will follow.

Conversions Received

Combat Course (Mindscape) IBM & C-64
Demon's Winter (SSI) IBM & C-64
Double Dragon (Arcadia) ST
First Over Germany (SSI) IBM
Heavy Metal (Access) IBM
Hole-In-One Miniature Golf (Digitek) C-64
Honeymooners (First Row) C-64
Indiana Jones $ Temple of Doom (Mindscape) IBM & Amiga
John Elway's QB (Melbourne House) Apple IIe/IIC
Out Run (Mindscape) IBM
Powerstyx (Magic Bytes) Amiga
Red Storm Rising (Microprose) IBM
Twilight Zone (First Row) Amiga
Zork Zero (Infocom) Amiga

Circle Reader Service #44 »



3W Announces
LIGHT DIVISION
Flashpoint in the Gulf!
Caspian Sea
U.S.S.R.
TURKEY
IRAQ
TEHERAN
SYRIA
Persian Gulf
U.A.E.
The near future and Iran has closed the Strait of Hormuz. President Bush sends in the 29th Light Division to preserve the West's vital oil link.
Your mission is to open the Strait, keep it open, and fend off counter attacks from Iranian, and possibly, Soviet forces.
Based on the 3W board game designed by award-winner, Joe Balkoski.
This computer version, programmed by Eric Hyman is the first in a series of board game conversions which will include *Tomorrow the World, Decision at Kasserine,* and *Forward to Richmond*. These games will take full advantage of each system's memory, graphic and sound capabilities.
LOOK FOR 3W'S NEW RELEASE — PARACHUTES AT KANEV
Light Division Computer Game - $40.00. Available in Better Hobby Stores Everywhere.
Amiga version available in April. IBM, ST and Macintosh versions available in July. Made in the USA.
Visa/MasterCard Accepted. **3W 4070 West St., Cambria, CA 93428 • 805/927-1452**

GET THE PICTURE?

**It's One Thing to Read About a Game,
It's Another Thing to
Actually See It!**



"The footage on Miss Microprose is great! CGV gives you the feel of being there, whether it's at CES or flying aerobatics in Miss Microprose."
—Bill Stealey, President, Microprose

"CGW has always led the field in bringing the real facts to computer gamers. CGV is another great idea from the people at CGW."
—Bob Jacob, President, Cinemaware

"CGV is a great idea! It gives the gamer the best means yet to distinguish between unique products and 'me too' games."
—Lord British, Ultima Series, Origin

Up to now, the best way to learn about upcoming computer games was to read what the press had to say. Wouldn't you rather SEE the games yourself? Wouldn't you prefer deciding for yourself if a game has great graphics, impressive sound, and fast-moving action? NOW YOU CAN!

Computer Gaming World proudly presents CGV (Computer Gaming Videomagazine). Come with us as we take you to the Consumer Electronics Show to see and hear all the games planned for release in the months ahead. Not only will you get a first-hand look at all the games, but we will also take you behind the scenes when we make our tours of the game companies. Whether it's taking a ride on Miss Microprose or exploring the hidden passageways of Lord British's new Britannia Manor, built on a mountaintop high above Austin, you will go where we go. The same type of high-quality award winning coverage you've come to expect from CGW will be yours in CGV (only now you will see it, hear it, and experience it!).

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and order with your Visa/MasterCard.
CGV #1 will be released on July 15.
SAVE $3.00 if you order by June 30th.

Fantastic Voyages

(Continued from page 49)

real plane. "You learn to do things deliberately and not over-compensate by moving too fast," offered Sipe. Wilson confessed that he had put enough simulated planes into spins to respect the controls when he climbed into the T-28's cockpit.

The company slogan, "The action is simulated, the excitement is real," is more than the the insignia painted on Miss Microprose's fusillage and imprinted on the pilot's patches on the company's flight suits. It is an ideal which is taken seriously. As an experienced pilot, Major Stealey continually insists on details and features to make the products "feel" right. Even when it comes to products which are not based on flight, Major Bill has an impact. When we praised the design team of *M-1 Tank Platoon* because all the buildings were "live" (i.e. able to be blown up), we were told that Stealey had insisted. When we commented on the secondary explosions displayed when armored vehicles were destroyed (a nice touch!), we were told that Major Bill had wanted them.

Authenticity is a hallmark of the company's products. In terms of research, the company encourages book purchases. According to Arnold Hendrick, the company has more than $1,000 worth of *Janes' Fighting Ships* and *Janes' Fighting Aircraft* alone. When their own resources fail, Arnold notes that the Library of Congress is a short drive away. For *Sword of the Samurai*, the design team took time out to visit the Smithsonian in order to research the tapestries from the particular time period. For *M-1 Tank Platoon*, Arnold has utilized the "Freedom of Information Act" to request government materials and secured used manuals from friends who have served in the vehicles. Research is vital to the design concept.

Another **Microprose** characteristic is the company's Quality Assurance program. Since the company relies so heavily on in-house testing, we were curious as to how **Microprose** avoids tunnel vision (i.e. becoming so close to the product that they cannot find the problems). According to Al Roireau, they make certain that there are personnel that are hands-off on a given project until late in the design process. Then, the "hands-off" people try to do quirky things to the products they haven't worked on. On the next product, there will often be a flip-flop so that everybody ends up testing everyone else's products.

Asked how the company deals with testing IBM products, Roireau noted that they use 12 or 13 different IBM clones and 12 or 13 different graphic card configurations to test out their products. "Of course, there are always configurations we don't expect. We never dreamed anyone would run a VGA card in mono-mode, for instance, but it happens."

We left the **Microprose** premises with an impression that the corporate team really *is* comprised of Micro(computer) Pro(fessional)s. We also left with another distinct impression. After watching "Miss Microprose" take off under a rapid rate of climb, we know that, like Bill Stealey himself, this company intends to keep flying.

CGW

Presumed Guilty

(Continued from page 31)

As a news bulletin came in, the screen began to blink and flash and everything locked up. No key would work, nothing I tried would bring the screen back to normal. My only recourse was to reboot the system. This happened several times, with the lock-up sometimes occurring even before the bulletin came in.

Finally, on about the sixth or seventh attempt, using a save game just prior to the most recent one, I was able to get through to the finish. I suspect the problem was caused by several timed events trying to go off at once, jamming the game completely at that point. Whatever the cause, it made for a very aggravating experience.

The final wrap-up at the end was also not very satisfying. While the final details of the plot are revealed, there are still several loose ends left over that are not explained.

The sloppiness in this game shows throughout, from the errors in the manual through the utilities that don't work properly to the numerous typos and misspellings in the text, the incessant noise of the game (no way to turn off the sound), and the final crash at the end. What might have been a reasonably good game is made frustrating and unenjoyable by the lack of adequate quality control.

Bottom line: It is impossible to recommend such a game in any way until the mess is cleaned up.

 CGW

process intensity (i.e. the program does a lot with the player's input). He went on to state that even though technology makes it possible to have prettier graphics and more effective sound, interactivity is the basis of the designer's competitive advantage. Posters and film offer prettier images. Compact Discs offer more intense audio experiences. But, you *cannot* truly interact with these media.

"Your mind is *not* a passive agent." said Crawford as he flamboyantly affirmed that Interactivity is to human communication what the theory of relativity is to weaponry—a historical divide. The ex-college professor reached critical mass as he shouted, "We are the Manhatten Project of Communications. We have it within our grasp. Seize it!"

Distant Choices

As the conference's futurist of choice, Greg Riker went on record with a list of probable, hopeful, and visionary advances for the computer entertainment industry. In five years, Riker predicts a wallet-sized 68030 computer with optical storage standard and digitized a-v on a 256 color imagery base. He perceives arcades where a consumer will be able to test games in an arcade box before buying and can download the games to his pocket computer if he decides to purchase them.

By the year 2000, he believes that digital video will be a reality with HDTV standard. In addition, he projects increased density of optical storage and stereo eyephones with full 3-D (analogous to current use of headphones). Further, a bold prediction features the beginning steps of neural I/O (BI/O).

Twenty years down the line, the vision is more wildly speculative. Riker posits a neural I/O standard. He notes that in Czechoslovakia, scientists have experienced with electrodes on the side of the head and neck, which send low-level electrical impulses to fool the inner ear into experiencing movement. Prior to a more advanced neural standard, he anticipates dvancements in forced feedback controllers. Jet Propulsion Laboratories already uses controllers to simulate resistance to the user in order to control real robots in a remote environment. Can consumer applications be far behind?

In closing, Riker reminded his audience of the primacy of the game by playing a portion of the "Elementary, My Dear Data" episode from *StarTrek: The Next Generation*. Data asks the doctor, "Do you mean to say there is some value in losing?" The doctor replies, "Of course. It's the great teacher." The game is still afoot, no matter what the technology.

Who Ya' Gonna' Call?

The assembled designers would call the following publishers in each category: **Best Technical Support:** Electronic Arts (Runner Up: Microprose); **Best Quality Assurance:** Sierra (Runners Up: Electronic Arts, Origin); **Most Innovative Publisher:** Cinemaware (Runners Up: Electronic Arts, Microprose); **Best Producer:** Shelley Day (Accolade) and Richard Hillemann (Electronic Arts) (Runners Up: Mark Johnson (Activision), Sam Nelson (Accolade)); **Best Publisher:** Accolade (Runners Up: Microprose, Origin)

Verdict of History

Though it would be impossible to describe all the sessions or to measure the impact which they will have on future products, it is certain that no one can experience this quality of "interaction" without the results contributing positively to one's work and vision. **CGW**



Guts & Glory!

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If you can describe in one or two paragraphs the tactics and strategy that make you successful at a particular game, we want to hear from you. Thousands of readers do, too. Send your ideas to:

Strategically Speaking
c/o Computer Gaming World
P.O. Box 4566
Anaheim, CA 92803-4566.

Circle Reader Service #47

On the R.I.D. card provided opposite page 4, please rate the following games (if you have played them) and articles (if you have read them) by using a letter grade scale (I.e. A to F). Just rate the games as if you were an educator. As with the world of education, the scale will translate to:

A= Excellent

B= Above Average

C= Average

D= Below Average

F= Failure

If you wish, you may assign pluses (+) or minuses (-) to your letter grade (i.e. B+, B-, C+, C-, etc.). As always, rate only those games that you have played.

Over the next three issues we will rerate all of the games on our current R.I.D. list and a number of other titles as well. Remember that thousands of gamers will be making buying decisions based on the results of these ratings, so help your fellow gamer out and let him know what is a worthy purchase and what is not.

Demographics

(List the appropriate number)

1. What is your age ?

- *1 = Under 14 years old*
- *2 = 14-17 years old*
- *3 = 18-20 years old*
- *4 = 21-30 years old*
- *5 = 31-35 years old*
- *6 = 36-40 years old*
- *7 = 41-50 years old*
- *8 = 51+ years old*

2. What machine(s) do you play games on?

(List all numbers that apply. List the machine you use most often first, the others in decending order of use).

- *1 = IBM, clones, Tandy*
- *2 = Amiga*
- *3 = Apple 8 bit*
- *4 = Apple IIgs*
- *5 = Atari ST*
- *6 = Atari 8 bit*
- *7 = C-64/128*
- *8 = Macintosh*
- *9 = Other (specify)*

3. How much time do you typically spend playing computer games each week?

- *1 = Less than 2 hours*
- *2 = 2-5 hours*
- *3 = 6-10 hours*
- *4 = 11-20 hours*
- *5 = 21-30 hours*
- *6 = 31+ hours*

Games

RID #59 Questions

4. Dungeon Master (FTL)
5. F-19 Stealth Fighter (Microprose)
6. Wasteland (EA)
7. Red Storm Rising (Microprose)
8. Ultima V (Origin)
9. Battlehawks 1942 (Lucasfilm)
10. Project: Stealth Fighter (Microprose)
11. King's Quest IV (Sierra)
12. Might & Magic II (New World)
13. Genghis Khan (Koei)
14. The Magic Candle (Mindcraft)
15. Bard's Tale III (EA)
16. Battles of Napoleon (SSI)
17. Combat Course (Mindscape)
18. Airborne Ranger (Microprose)
19. Pool of Radiance (SSI)
20. Hostage Rescue Mission (Mindscape)
21. Rocket Ranger (Cinemaware)
22. Neuromancer (Interplay)
23. Romance of the 3 Kingdoms (Koei)
24. Typhoon of Steel (SSI)
25. Police Blotter (Avalon Hill)
26. Presumed Guilty (Cosmi)
27. RoboCop (Data East)
28. Prophecy (Activision)
29. Guardians of Infinity (Paragon)
30. Sargon 4 (Spinnaker)
31. Tangled Tales (Origin)
32. Pro Soccer (Microplay)
33. Lords of the Rising Sun (Cinemaware)
34. Deja Vu II (Mindscape)
35. Silpheed (Sierra)
36. Ninja 2 (Activision)
37. Navy S.E.A.L. (Cosmi)
38. Overrun! (SSI)
39. Chomp! (Cosmi)
40. Space Quest III (Sierra)

Articles

41. Letters
42. Abrams Battle Tank Review
43. Napoleonic Scenario
44. Are You Saved?
45. Batman Review
46. Hidden Agenda Review
47. Scorpion's Mail (Hints)
48. Presumed Guilty Review
49. Fantastic Voyages IV
50. Journey Review
51. Rumor Bag

Questions

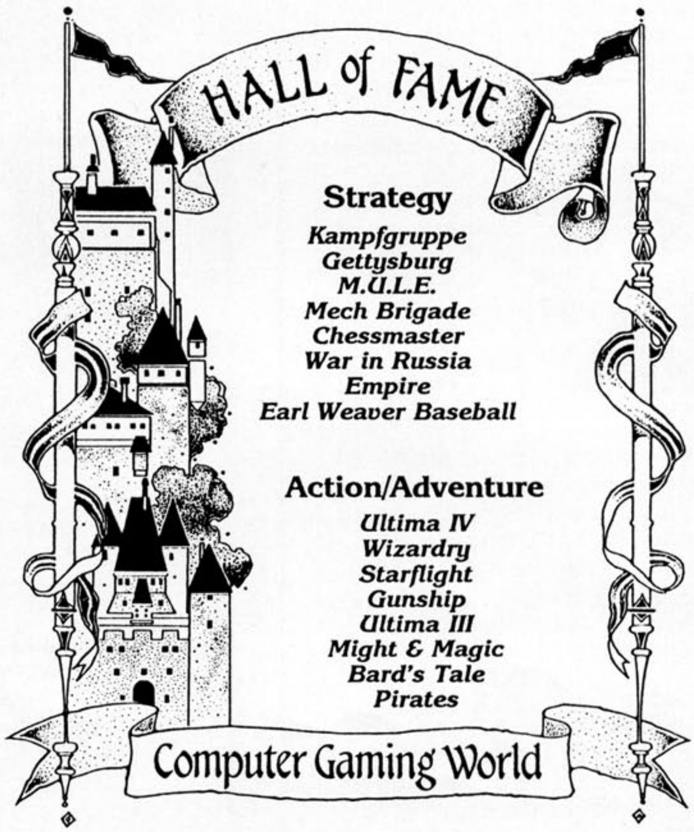
52. If you were the editor-in-chief, would you continue to publish "The Rumor Bag" with or without the fiction that ties the rumors together?

A = Keep the fiction,

B = Dump the fiction,

C = Dump the column, or

D = Give the unknown journalist a raise.



Be it known to all gentle persons that the above named games have been well spoken of by our readers over a goodly period of time. Therefore they have been enshrined in the CGW Hall of Fame as games of renown and worthy of play by all

Tangled TALES™

Myth, Magic and Mirth

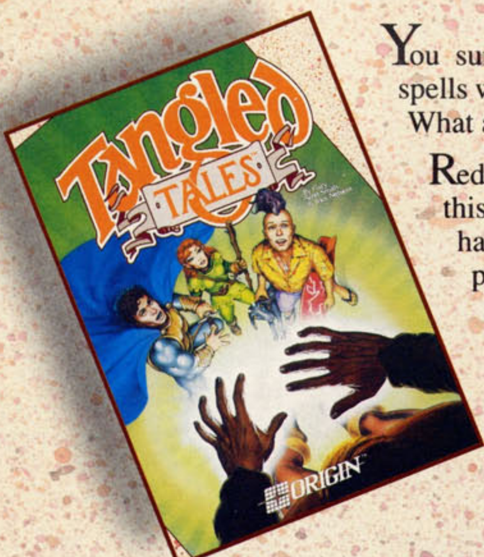


Screens shown are for Apple II.





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You sure aren't the wizard's star pupil. In fact, he took away your spells when you spilled his precious adamantite dust on the squirrel. What a mess that turned out to be!

Redeem yourself, fill your spell book and save Violet Valley on this fractured journey where time stands still — or maybe just hangs around. It's filled with stirring combat and perplexing puzzles, and features dazzling graphics with animated illustrations, 3-D dungeons and detailed overhead views.

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